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POEMS

OF

BENJ. F. TAYLOR

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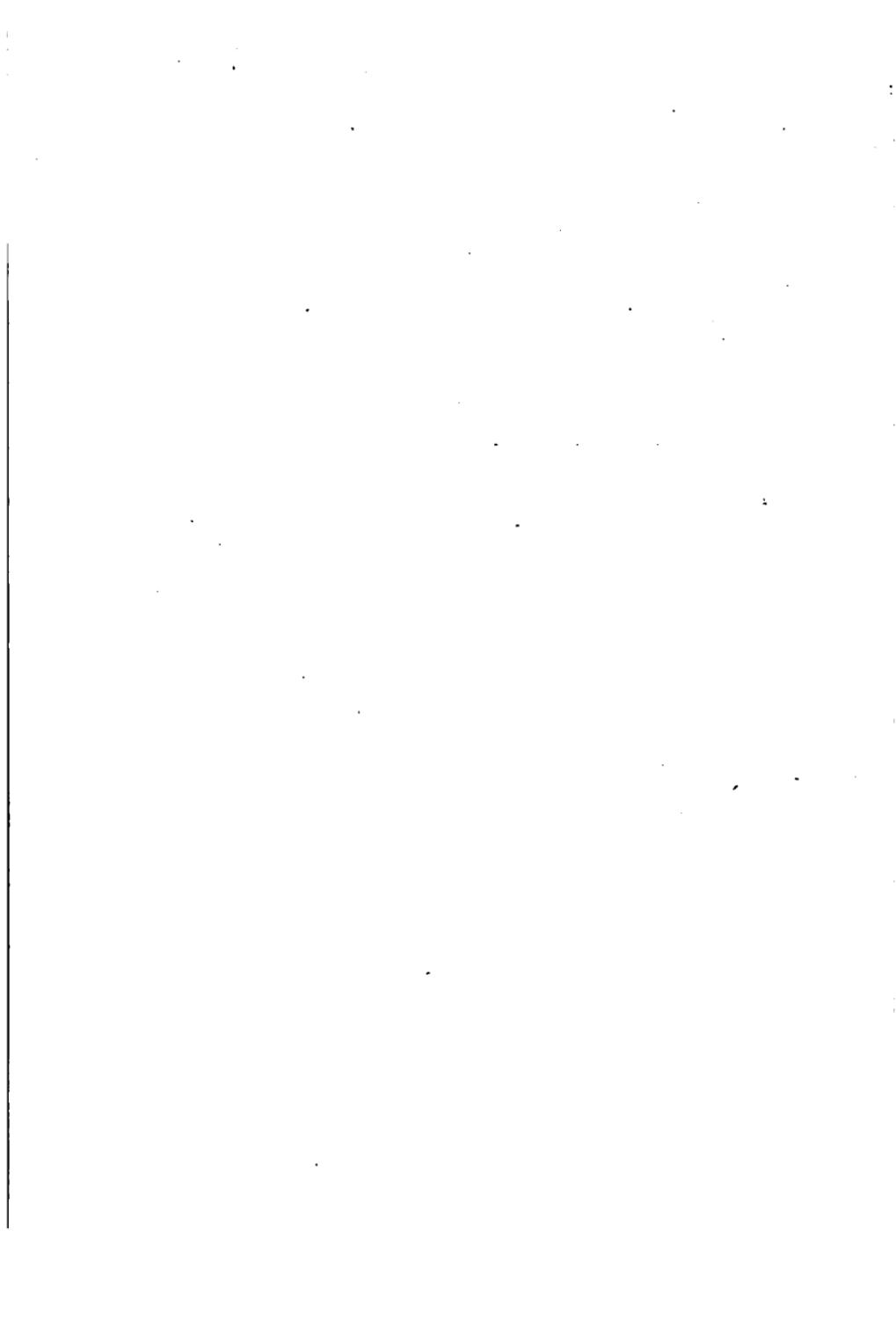


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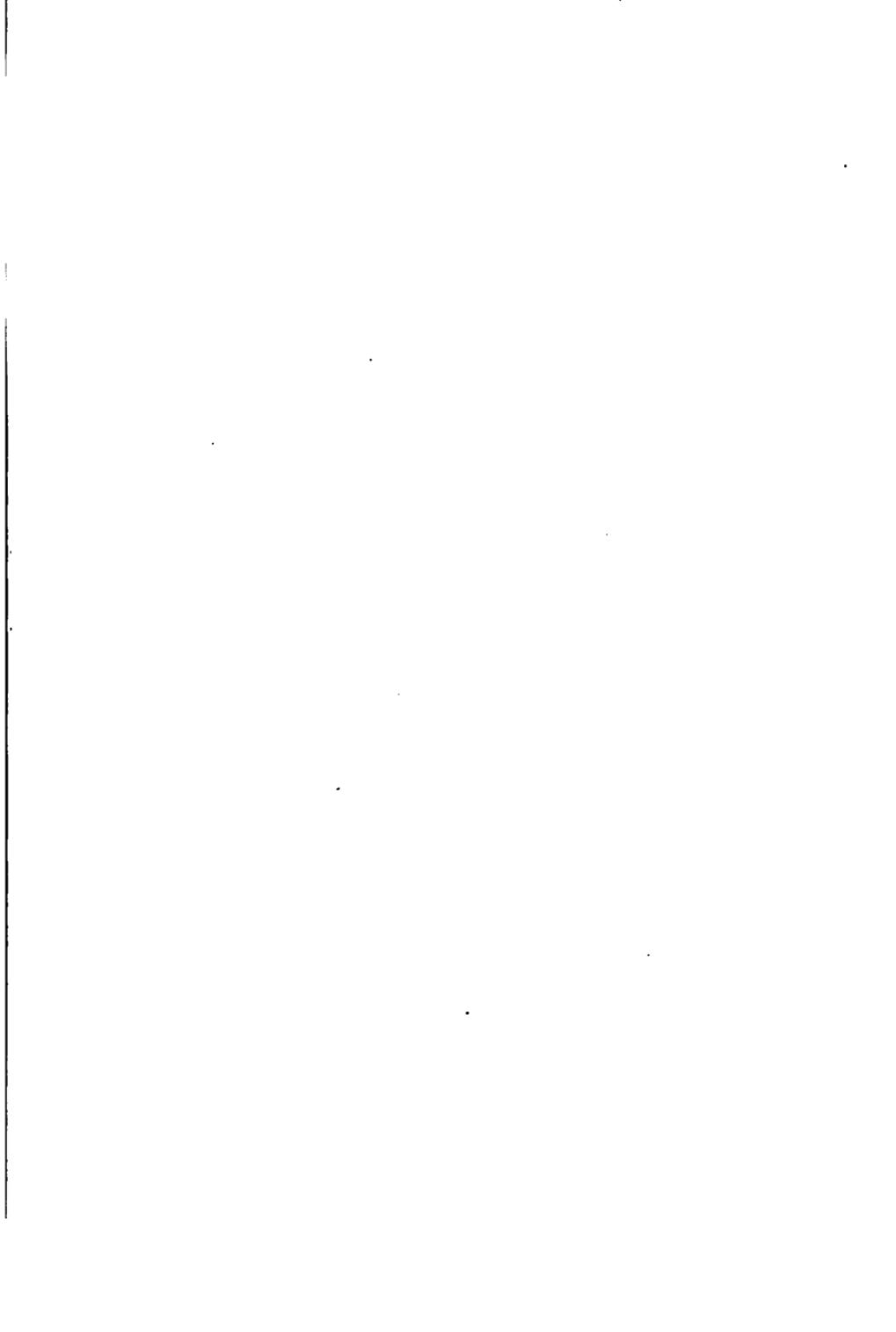
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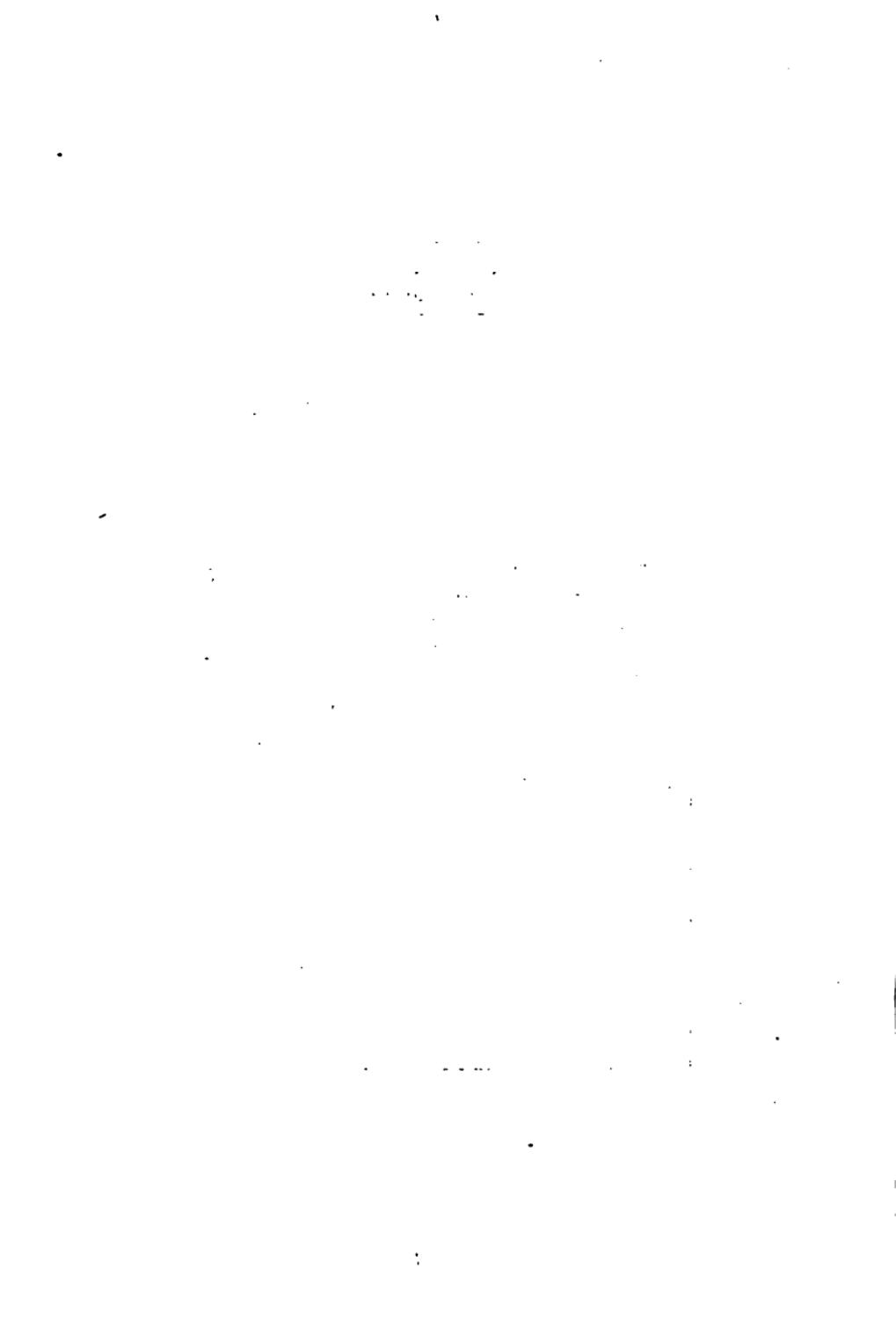
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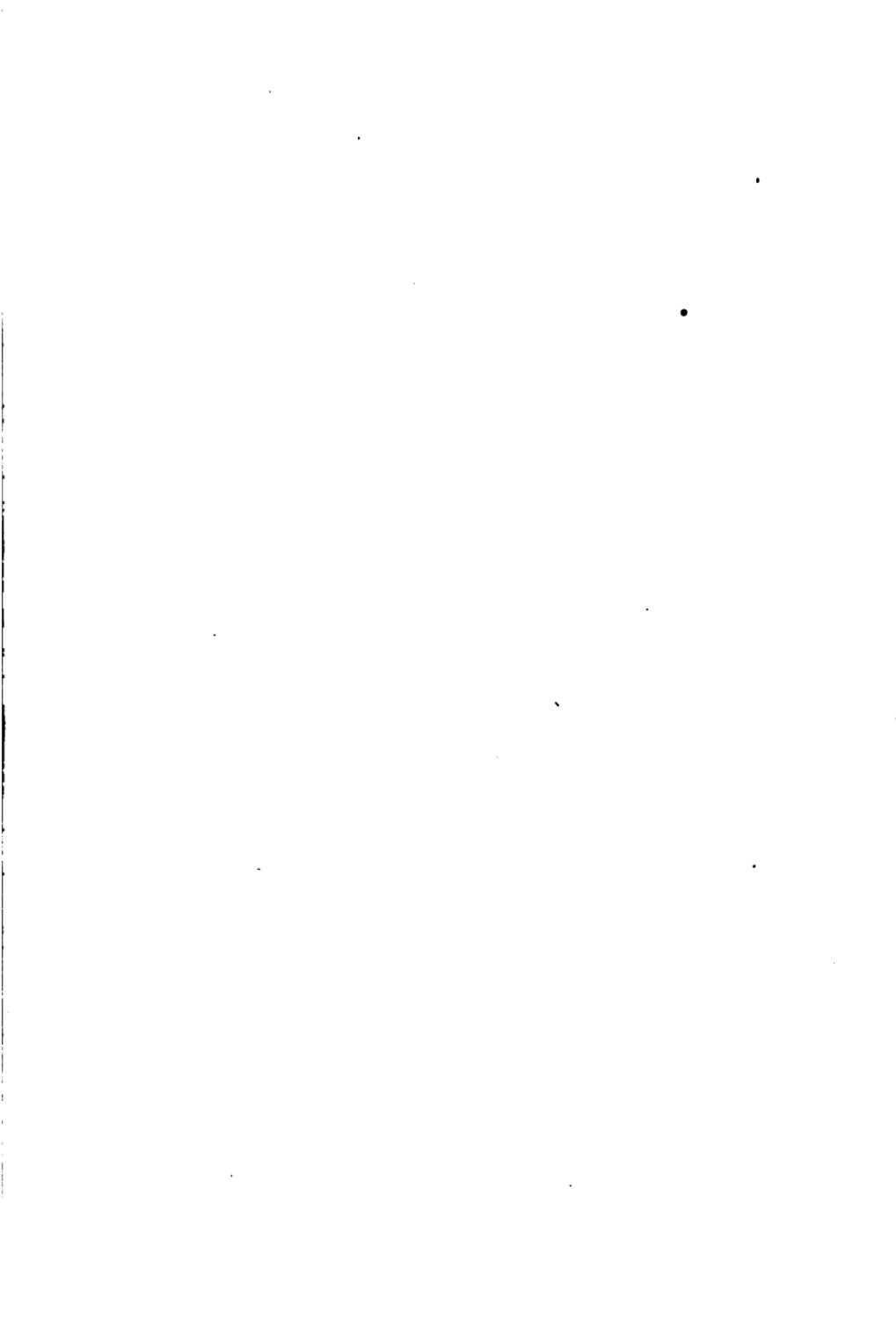
**TO**

**MRS. ELLA BRADFORD BROWN,**

**BY HER**

**RELATIVE AND FRIEND,**

**BENJ. F. TAYLOR.**



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## POEMS OF COUNTRY LIFE.

---

### LAZY.

UNDER the maple tree lying supine,  
Timing the beat of a pendulum vine,  
Swinging the Delawares turning to wine.

Gazing straight upward a mile in the blue,  
Watching a cloud that has nothing to do,  
Wishing a deed for an acre or two;

Nothing to do but come down in the rain,  
Born of the mist unto heaven again,  
Nothing to sow, and no reaping of grain.

Watching a bee in his pollen pant'loon  
Droning him home in the chrysolite noon,  
Ghost of a drummer-boy drumming a tune.

Watching a jay on the cherry tree nigh,  
Stranger to love, with its cruel bright eye;  
What of that jacket as blue as the sky?

Splashing his crest with the cherry's red blood,  
Jauntiest robber that ranges the wood,  
Nothing will name him but blue Robin Hood.

Hearing a bird with her English all right  
Calling Somebody from morning till night,  
Waiting forever the mystic "Bob White."

Woman's own cousin since Adam began,  
Beautiful Voice that is wanting a man,  
Quail in a coif of the time of Queen Anne.

Counting the leaves as they drift from the rose,  
Strowing with fragrance my place of repose ;  
Dying? Ah, no, only changing its clothes.

Watching a spider pay out her last line,  
Working at Euclid's Geometry fine,  
Web is all woven, and weaver will dine.

Watching a fly laze along to its doom,  
Silken the meshes, but death in the loom,  
Shrouded and eaten, but never a tomb.

Sparrow a-drowse on a limb overhead,  
Opens an eye when the spider is fed.  
Opens a bill, and the spider is dead!

Watching a butterfly slowly unfold,  
Crowning a post with a blossom of gold  
Strange as the rod that did blossom of old.

Hinged on a life is the duplicate page,  
Lettered in light by a wiser than sage,  
Lasting a summer and read for an age.

Burst from the bonds ! For that coffin was thine,  
Tenantless thing where the sycamores shine,  
Riven and rent, and the worm is divine.

Born from the dust, and its veriest slave,  
Hail to the herald direct from the grave !  
Pinion of beauty, resplendently wave !

Bringing from far, what no angel could say,  
Something of them who have vanished away,  
Left me alone on this amethyst day.

Rent is the chrysalis hid in the sod,  
All the dear tenantry dwelling abroad,  
Gone through the gate of the glory of God !

---

## LIFE ON THE FARM.

## MILKING TIME.

AT the foot of the hill the milk-house stands,  
Where the Balm of Gilead spreads his hands,  
And the willow trails at each pendent tip  
The lazy lash of a golden whip,  
And an ice-cold spring with a tinkling sound  
Makes a bright-green edge for the dark-green ground.

Cool as a cave is the air within,  
Brave are the shelves with the burnished tin  
Of the curving shores, and the seas of white  
That turn to gold in a single night,

As if the disc of a winter noon  
Should take the tint of a new doubloon.

Burned to a coal is the amber day,  
Noon's splendid fire has faded away,  
And, lodged on the edge of a world grass-grown,  
Like a great live ember, glows the sun;  
When it falls behind the crimson bars  
Look out for the sparks of the early stars.

With the clang of her bell a motherly brown—  
No trace of her lineage handed down—  
Is leading the long deliberate line  
Of the Devons red and the Durhams fine.  
“Co-boss!” “Co-boss!” and the caravan  
With a dowager swing comes down the lane,  
And lowing along from the clover bed  
Troops over the bars with a lumbering tread.

Under the lee of the patient beasts,  
On their tripod stools like Pythian priests,  
The tow-clad boys and the linsey girls  
Make the cows “give down” in milky swirls.  
There’s a stormy time in the drifted pails,  
There’s a sea-foam swath in the driving gales,  
Then girls and boys with whistle and song,  
Two pails apiece, meander along  
The winding path in the golden gloom,  
And “set” the milk in the twilight room.

#### NIGHT ON THE FARM.

Now all clucked home to their feather beds  
Are the velvety chicks of the downy heads,

In the old Dutch style with the beds above,  
All under the wings of a hovering love,  
And a few chinked in, as plump as wrens,  
Around the edge of the ruffled hens.

With nose in the grass the dog keeps guard,  
With long-drawn breaths in the old farm-yard  
The cattle strand on the scattered straw,  
And cease the swing of the under jaw.

The cat's eyes shine in the currant bush,  
Dews in the grass and stars in the hush,  
And over the marsh the lightning-bug  
Is swinging his lamp to the bull-frog's chug,  
And the slender chaps in the greenish tights,  
That jingle and trill the sleigh-bells nights.  
The shapes with the padded feet prowl round  
And the crescent moon has run aground,  
And the inky beetles blot the night  
And have blundered out the candle-light,  
And everywhere the pillows fair  
Are printed with heads of tumbled hair.  
Time walks the house with a clock-tick tread;  
Without and within the farm's abed.

#### THE MORNING.

Apprenticed angels everywhere  
Were out all night in the darkened air,  
A dome to build and a wall to lay  
And shelter the world from outer day.

They smoothed the arch with trowels of night,  
Work as they would, it never shed light;

They mended the roof with might and main,  
But it leaked like broken thatch in the rain.

At crevice and chink the curves of blue  
Would let the glory glimmering through  
From the countless stars like silver sand  
All sifted and sowed with radiant hand.

To show Creation's grain in the sky  
God quarried the worlds and let them lie!

That eastern wall with its granite crown  
In the early dawn came tumbling down,  
With no more crash than the roses make  
When out of the buds the beauties break.

The world is a-fire with a pearl surprise,  
A garden gate to our wondering eyes  
Discloses the path to Paradise:  
The dews are off, and the bees abroad,  
The Sun stands armed in the gates of God !

#### THE CHURNING.

No graceful shape like a Grecian urn,  
But upright, downright, stands the churn.  
Broad at the base and tapering small,  
Above it the dasher straight and tall—  
Windowless tower with flagstaff bare,  
Warrior or warden, nobody there !  
Fashioned of cedar, queen of the wood,  
Cedar as sweet as a girl in a hood  
Hiding her face like a blush-rose bud.

The dasher waits knee-keep in the cream,  
As cattle wade in the shady stream,  
And flat in the foot as a four-leaved clover,  
Just waits a touch to trample it over.

Beside the churn a maiden stands,  
Nimble and naked her arms and hands—  
Another Ruth when the reapers reap—  
Her dress, as limp as a flag asleep,  
Is faced in front with a puzzling check;  
Her feet are bare as her sun-brown'd neck;  
Her hair rays out like a lady fern.  
With a single hand she starts the churn,  
The play at the first is free and swift,  
Then she gives both hands to the plunge and lift:

A short quick splash in the Milky Way—  
One-two, one-two, in Iambic play—  
A one-legg'd dance in a wooden clog,  
Dancing a jig in a watery bog—  
A soberer gait at an all-day jog—  
Up-down, up-down, like a pony's feet,  
A steady trot in a sloppy street;  
The spattering dash and the tinkling wash  
Deaden and dull to a creamy swash—  
Color of daffodil shows in the churn!  
Glimpses of gold! Beginning to turn!  
Slower—and lower—deader and dumb—  
Daisies and buttercups! Butter has come!

What thinks the maiden all the while?  
Whatever she thinks, it makes her smile,

Whatever she does, it is only seeming,  
Spinning and weaving, wedding and dreaming;  
Ah, charms are hid in the ingots gold,  
And more come out than the churn can hold !  
Not butter at all, but bonnets sown  
With gardens of flowers and all full-blown ;  
A clouded comb of the tortoise shell,  
Ah, it is a beauty, and she a belle !

A grape-leaf breastpin's restless shine  
Is twinkling up from the fairy mine.  
The dasher clinks on a bright gold ring;  
Morocco shoes, like a martin's wing,  
Come up with a gown of flounces silk  
Some fairy lost in the buttermilk !  
Ribbons of blue for love-knot ties  
To match the tint of her longing eyes ;  
Ribbons of pink and a belt of gray  
Rippling along in a watery way.

She looks at herself in Fancy's glass,  
And she sees her own lithe figure pass—  
She closes her eyes and looks again,  
And sees, as she dreams, the prince of men—  
She closes her eyes, and, side by side,  
He is the bridegroom and she the bride !  
Ah, never, my girl, will visions burn  
As bright as rose in the cedar churn !  
Ah, what have we won if this be lost:  
The blessing free and the bliss at cost !

**MOWING.**

I.

O H, days that are always dying,  
Each turning its face to mine  
Across the breadth of a life-time,  
Like suns with their level shine  
That set on a world divine !

II.

Sweet day of doom in the meadow  
Most redolent day abroad,  
When grasses, daisies, and clover  
All die like the Saints of God,  
And fragrance floats in the sunshine  
And eloquence fills the sod.

III.

But Time has mowed with the mowers,  
The boys have boys of their own,  
A monster prowls in the meadow,  
The daisies of girls are grown ;  
I linger and think alone.

IV.

That maple Bethel of summer !  
I think of its emerald crown,  
Whence fell the dapples of shadow,  
Rosettes and a golden brown,  
As if a beautiful leopard  
In a timothy lair lay down.

V.

There heroes sit in the noonings  
And gaze on the battle ground,

And wipe their brows with their jackets,  
 And luncheon and laugh go round,  
 And lads in the yarn suspenders,  
 The X-backed boys abound !



## VI.

A jug as sleek as a cricket  
 Is drawn from a grassy drift,  
 Swung lightly out by the shoulder,  
 Swung up with a dexterous lift,  
 Swung back to the bird's-nest rift !

## VII.

The mowers all rallied and ready  
 Strike in at the leader's word,  
 Right on through clusters of lilies,  
 Those duplicate texts of the Lord,  
 And put the broad field to sword !

## VIII.

The woods grow fine in the distance,  
As moss in a painted urn,  
The lady elms and the beeches  
Are patterns in lace that turn  
Asparagus plumes and fern.

## IX.

The hills are polished as porcelain  
And tinted with mountain blue,  
One lamb-like cloud, as if angels,  
With nought upon earth to do,  
Had brought up by hand a ewe,

## X.

Lies clean and white in the welkin  
As snow on a blue-grass hill ;  
A red-capped drummer is beating  
Tattoo with an ivory bill ;  
A small brown fifer is playing  
A low and a lazy trill ;  
And the blade of a narrow rill  
Slips out from under a shadow,  
A scabbard so strangely still,  
That what was pictured by willow  
Might well have been cast by hill !

## XI.

The birds trail wings in the sunshine  
And sit in a silent row,  
The locusts are winding their watches,  
The butterflies opening slow,  
Like flame are the flowers in blow.

## XII.

A breeze drops out of the maple  
     And travels the rippling grain;  
 The fog lifts white from the river,  
     The glorified ghost of rain  
     Ascending to heaven again.

## XIII.

The fields are grand in their velvet,  
     The tall grass rustles red,  
 The bees boil up in their anger,  
     The meadow lark leaves her bed,  
     Right onward the mowers tread !

## XIV.

With steady stride they are swaying  
     The snath with the chronic writhe,  
 A wispy rush and a rustle,  
     A swing to the grasses lithe,  
     Right home through the swath the scythe.

## XV.

Then rising, falling, and drifting,  
     As buoys on the billows ride,  
 The braided brims of the shadows  
     Afloat on the red-top tide  
     The brows of the mowers hide.

## XVI.

The blades are rasping and sweeping,  
     The timothy tumbles free,  
 The field is ridgy and rolling  
     With swaths like the surging sea  
     Heaped up to the toiler's knee.

## XVII.

Hark! *whit-to-whit* of the whetstone,  
The stridulous kiss of steel,  
The shout of winners exultant  
That distance the field, and wheel  
As gay as a Highland reel.

## XVIII.

Swing right! Swift left! And the mowers  
Stream out in a sea-bird flight,  
The line grows dimmer and dotted  
With flickering shirt sleeves white  
Washed clean in the morning light.

## XIX.

The steel-cold eddies are whirling  
About and about their feet,  
Die, Clover, Grasses, and Daisies!  
No dead in the world so sweet,  
Ye slain of the windrow street!

## XX.

Oh, wreck and raid of September!  
Oh, prodigal death to die!  
Till April gay with her ribbon,  
Comes bringing the bluebird sky,  
Oh, lilies of Christ, good-by!

## THE SPINNING WHEEL.

A WHITE pine floor and a low-ceiled room,  
A wheel and a reel and a great brown loom,  
The windows out and the world in bloom,—

A pair of "swifts" in the corner, where  
The grandmother sat in her rush-wrought chair,  
And pulled at the distaff's tangled hair,

And sang to herself as she spun the tow  
While "the little wheel" ran as soft and low  
As muffled brooks where the grasses grow,  
And lie one way with the water's flow.

As the Christ's field lilies free from sin,  
So she grew like them when she ceased to spin,  
Counted her "knots" and handed them in.

"The great wheel" rigged in its harness stands—  
A three-legged thing with its spindle and bands—  
And the slender spokes, like the willow wands  
That spring so thick in the low, wet lands,  
Turn dense at the touch of a woman's hands.

As the wheel whirls swift, how rank they grow !  
But how sparse and thin when the wheel runs slow  
Forward and backward, and to and fro.

There's a heap of rolls like clouds in curl,  
And a bright-faced, springy, barefoot girl—  
She gives a touch and a careless whirl,

She holds a roll in her shapely hand  
That the sun has kissed and the wind has fanned,  
And its mate obeys the wheel's command.

There must be wings on her rosy heel ;  
And there must be bees in the spindled steel ;  
A thousand spokes in the dizzy wheel.

Have you forgotten the left-breast knock  
When you bagged the bee in the hollyhock,  
And the angry burr of an ancient clock

All ready to strike, came out of the mill,  
Where covered with meal the rogue was still,  
Till it made your thumb and finger thrill?

It is one, two, three, and the roll is caught;  
'Tis a backward step and the thread is taut;  
A hurry of wheel, and the roll is wrought.

'Tis one, two, three, and the yarn runs on,  
And the spindle shapes like a white pine cone,  
As even and still as something grown.

The barefoot maiden follows the thread,  
Like somebody caught and tethered and led  
Up to the buzz of the busy head.

With backward sweep and willowy bend  
Monarch would borrow if maiden could lend,  
She draws out the thread to the white wool's end.

From English sheep of the old-time farm,  
With their legs as fair as a woman's arm,  
And faces white as a girl's alarm.

She breaks her thread with an angry twang,  
Just as if at her touch a harp string rang  
And keyed to the quaint old song she sang,

That came to a halt on her cherry lip  
While she tied one knot that never could slip,  
And thought of another, when her ship—

All laden with dreams in splendid guise—  
Should sail right out of the azure skies  
And a lover bring, with great brown eyes.

Ah, broad the day, but her work was done—  
Two “runs” by reel. She had twisted and spun  
Her two score “knots” by set of sun,

With her one, two, three, the wheel beside,  
And the three, two, one, of her backward glide,  
So to and fro in calico pride  
Till the bees went home and day-time died.

Her apron white as the white sea foam,  
She gathered the wealth of her velvet gloom,  
And railed it in with a tall back comb.

She crushed the dews with her naked feet,  
The track of the sun was a golden street,  
The grass was cool, and the air was sweet.

The girl gazed up at the mackerel sky,  
And it looked like a pattern lifted high,  
But she never dreamed of angels nigh,

And she spoke right out: “Do just see there!  
What a blue and white for the clouded pair  
I’m going to knit for my Sunday wear!”

The wheel is dead and the bees are gone,  
And the girl is dressed in a silver lawn,  
And her feet are shod with golden dawn.

From a wind-swung tree that waves before,  
A shadow is dodging in at the door,—  
Flickering ghost on the white pine floor,—

And the cat, unlearned in shadow's law,  
Just touched its edge with a velvet paw  
To hold it still with an ivory claw.

But its spectral cloak is blown about,  
And a moment more and the ghost is out,  
And leaves us all in shadowy doubt

If ever it fell on floor at all,  
Or if ever it swung along the wall,  
Or whether a shroud or a phantom shawl.

Oh, brow that the old-time morning kissed !  
Good night, my girl of the double and twist !  
Oh, barefoot vision ! Vanishing mist !

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### THE OLD BARN.

GENUINE boys take to barns as ducks take to water; not dandies of barns, disguised with paint, and crowned with observatories, but roomy, gray, sincere fellows, with the perpetual twilight, and the big beam, and the broad bay, billowy with sweet hay, and the granary, with its delicious Radclifflian gloom, and the threshing floor, where flails fell, and feet danced after the husking to the measure of Money Musk; barns with no adorning save a diamond in each gable to let the swallows through, and a single chanticleer upon the ridge that creaks but never crows; barns with musical roofs, and twittering eaves, where the rainy days are the pleasantest in all the calendar.

Here, if anywhere, a boy slips off the harness of constraint and the shoes of propriety that he wears in the house, and turns himself out to grass — leastwise to hay — and climbs like the ambitious bean

of Jack the Giant Killer, and leaps like the frogs of Egypt, and makes a hoop of himself, and lets out his quicksilver life at every toe and finger end like sparks of lightning from the points of an electric wheel, and gives tongue like the hounds of Actæon, and, all the while, like the righteous, "with none to molest or make him afraid."

Later, he leads the dance with some belle of the husking on the oaken floor, by the twinkle of tin lanterns, and the eyes of the astonished horses shining in the stalls, and the fowls winking slow from the high perch.

The relentless years go on, and the man makes thought-pilgrimage to the homestead; but he reaches it by way of the barn, and he tarries there and enters it, sometimes, and beholds his own boyhood come to resurrection in the old twilight, amid the shouts of dead comrades, the flutter of dead birds, and the fragrance of clover that perished full forty mowings ago. The same bee in black velvet and yellow trimmings drifts in his saucy way over the door sill. The same red fanning mill stands beside the granary door, with a hen's nest in the hopper. The same bars of dusty sunshine strike through the creviced wall, and slant across the bay. There is a strange mingling of the living and the dead. A man can slip back into childhood faster in a barn than in a human dwelling. There are no new fashions in furniture. The doves and the swallows are in the same old clothes, and the clips of the broad-ax show as plain as ever on the cobwebbed beams.

If barns are the Meccas of rural boyhood, they were the first Christian churches of the young wilderness. Honored is the barn above all the palaces of earth, for in it the Saviour of the world was born, and the manger was His cradle.

#### THE OLD BARN.

A GREAT dim barn with the fragrant bay  
Up to the beam with the winter's hay,  
And its shrunken siding wasp nest gray;

Where the cracks between run up and down,  
Like the narrow lines in a striped gown.  
And let in light of a golden brown.

They are bars of bronze—they are silver snow—  
As the sunshine falls, or sifting slow,  
The white flakes drift on the wealth below

Of the clover blossoms faint with June  
That had heard all day his small bassoon  
As the ground bee played his hum-drum tune.

Ah, what would you give to have again  
Your pulse keep time with the dancing rain,  
When flashing through at the diamond pane

You saw the swallows' rapier wings  
As they cut the air in ripples and rings,  
And laughed and talked like human things?

When they drank each other's health, you thought—  
For the creak of the corks you surely caught—  
And all day long at their cabins wrought,

Till the mud-walled homes with a foreign look,  
A pictured street in an Aztec book,  
Began to show in each rafter'd nook?

Never again! Alack and alas!  
Like a breath of life on the looking-glass,  
Like a censer smoke, the pictures pass.

## THE FLAILS.

"Well, Jack and Jim," said the farmer gray,  
"The flour is out and we'll thrash to-day!"—

A hand is on the granary door,  
And a step is on the threshing floor—  
It is not his and it is not theirs—  
He went above by the golden stairs ;  
The boys are men and the nicknames grown,  
'Tis James Esquire and Reverend John.  
How they waltzed the portly sheaves about  
As they loosed their belts and shook them out  
In double rows on the threshing floor,  
Clean as the deck of a seventy-four.  
When down the midst in a tawny braid  
The sculptured heads of the straw were laid,  
It looked a poor man's family bed.

Ah, more than that, 'twas a carpet fair  
Whereon the flails with their measured tread  
Should time the step of the answered prayer,  
"Give us this day our daily bread!"  
Then the light half-whirl and the hickory clash  
With the full free swing of a buckskin lash,  
And the trump—tramp—trump, when the bed is new,  
In regular, dull, monotonous stroke,  
And the click—clack—click, on the floor of oak  
When the straw grows thin and the blows strike  
through;  
And the French-clock tick to the dancing feet  
With the small tattoo of the driven sleet,  
When the bouncing kernels bright and brown  
Leap lightly up as the flails come down.

#### THE FANNING MILL.

Hang up the flails by the big barn door!  
Bring out the mill of the one-boy power!

Nothing at all but a breeze in a box,  
Clumsy and red, it rattles and rocks,  
Sieves to be shaken and hopper to feed,  
A Chinaman's hat turned upside down,  
The grain slips through at a hole in the crown—  
Out with the chaff and in with the speed !  
The crank clanks round with a boy's quick will,  
The fan flies fast till it fills the mill  
With its breezy vanes, as the whirled leaves fly  
In an open book when the gust goes by;  
And the jerky jar and the zigzag jolt  
Of the shaken sieves, and the jingling bolt,  
And the grate of cogs and the axle's clank,  
And the rowlock jog of the crazy crank,  
And the dusty rush of the gusty chaff  
The worthless wreck of the harvest's raff,  
And never a lull, the brisk breeze blows  
From the troubled grain its tattered clothes,  
Till tumbled and tossed, it downward goes  
The rickety route by the racketey stair,  
Clean as the sand that the simoom snows,  
And drifts at last in a bank so fair  
You know you have found the answered prayer !

## THE OLD BARN'S TENANTRY.

The rooster stalks on the manger's ledge,  
He has a tail like a scimitar's edge,  
  
A marshal's plume on his Afghan neck,  
An admiral's stride on his quarter deck.

He rules the roost and he walks the bay,  
With a dreadful cold and a Turkish way,

Two broadsides fires with his rapid wings—  
This sultan proud, of a line of kings—

One guttural laugh, four blasts of horn  
Five rusty syllables rouse the morn !

The Saxon lambs in their woolen tabs  
Are playing school with their *a, b, abs* ;

*A, e! I, o!* All the cattle spell  
Till they make the blatant vowels tell,

And a half-laugh whinny fills the stalls  
When down in the rack the clover falls..

A dove is waltzing around his mate,  
Two chevrons black on his wings of slate,

And showing off with a wooing note  
The satin shine of his golden throat.

It is Ovid's "Art of Love" re-told  
In a binding fine of blue and gold !

#### HUSKING.

Ah, the buxom girls that helped the boys—  
The nobler Helens of humbler Troys—

As they stripped the husks with rustling fold  
From eight-rowed corn as yellow as gold,

By the candle-light in pumpkin bowls,  
And the gleams that showed fantastic holes

In the quaint old lantern's tattooed tin,  
From the hermit glim set up within ;

By the rarer light in girlish eyes  
As dark as wells, or as blue as skies.

I hear the laugh when the ear is red,  
I see the blush with the forfeit paid,

The cedar cakes with the ancient twist,  
The cider cup that the girls have kissed,

And I see the fiddler through the dusk  
As he twangs the ghost of "Money Musk!"

The boys and girls in a double row  
Wait face to face till the magic bow

Shall whip the tune from the violin  
And the merry pulse of the feet begin:

#### MONEY MUSK.

In shirt of check and tallowed hair  
The fiddler sits in the bulrush chair  
Like Moses' basket stranded there  
    On the brink of Father Nile.  
He feels the fiddle's slender neck,  
Picks out the notes with thrum and check,  
And times the tune with nod and beck,  
    And thinks it a weary while.

All ready! Now he gives the call,  
Cries, "*Honor to the ladies!*" All  
The jolly tides of laughter fall  
    And ebb in a happy smile.

D-o-w-n comes the bow on every string,  
"*First couple join right hands and swing!*"

And light as any bluebird's wing  
     *"Swing once and a half times round!"*  
 Whirls Mary Martin all in blue—  
 Calico gown and stockings new,  
 And tinted eyes that tell you true,  
     Dance all to the dancing sound

She flits about big Moses Brown  
 Who holds her hands to keep her down  
 And thinks her hair a golden crown  
     And his heart turns over once !  
 His cheek with Mary's breath is wet,  
 It gives a second somerset !  
 He means to win the maiden yet,  
     Alas, for the awkward dunce !

"Your stoga boot has crushed my toe!"  
 "I'd rather dance with one-legged Joe,"  
 "You clumsy fellow!"   *"Pass below!"*  
     And the first pair dance apart.  
 Then *"Forward six!"* advance, retreat,  
 Like midges gay in sunbeam street,  
 'Tis Money Musk by merry feet  
     And the Money Musk by heart !

*"Three quarters round your partner swing!"*  
 "Across the set!" The rafters ring,  
 The girls and boys have taken wing  
     And have brought their roses out;  
 'Tis *"Forward six!"* with rustic grace  
 Ah, rarer far than—"Swing to place!"  
 Than golden clouds of old point-lace  
     They bring the dance about.

Then clasping hands all—"Right and left!"  
 All swiftly weave the measure deft  
 Across the woof in living west,  
 And the Money Musk is done!  
 Oh, dancers of the rustling husk,  
 Good night, sweethearts, 'tis growing dusk,  
 Good night for aye to Money Musk,  
 For the heavy march begun!

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## THE OLD SCHOOL-HOUSE.

LOW-BROWED school-house, silver-sided,  
 L Crowns life's Eastern shore,  
 Where the downy day-times glided,  
 Ere the throngs around the door  
 By the Jordan were divided  
 Evermore!

Evermore till comes the Master  
 Through the gates ajar,  
 And each faded earthly aster  
 Shall have blossomed out a star—  
 God, the Master of *our* master,  
 From afar!

Slow the battered door is giving,  
 As it gave of yore—  
 Lo, the life it has been living  
 Curved upon the entry floor—  
 Closed at last on every grieving,  
 Locked at last with spiders' reeving—  
 Weary door!

Cenotaph of vanished faces  
    Lettered by the dead—  
Carved and graved the empty places,  
    Names unmeaning and unsaid,  
And no token of the graces  
    That have fled !

As the door of ceaseless swinging,  
    Wander as it will,  
Ever to the portal clinging  
    Sweeps its arc, and bides there still,  
So life's curve is homeward bringing,  
    So my heart, forever winging,  
    Bides there still !

SCHOOL "CALLED."

Don't you hear the children coming,  
    Coming into school ?  
Don't you hear the master drumming  
    On the window with his rule ?  
Master drumming, children coming  
    Into school ?

Tip-toed figures reach the catch,  
Tiny fingers click the latch,  
Curly-headed girls throng in  
Lily-free from toil and sin;  
Breezy boys bolt in together,  
Bringing breaths of winter weather —  
Bringing baskets Indian-checked,  
Dinners in them sadly wrecked;  
Ruddy-handed, mittens off,  
Soldiers from a Malakoff

Built of snow all marble white,  
Bastions shining in the light,  
Marked with many a dint and dot  
Of the ice-cold cannon shot !  
Hear the last assaulting shout,  
See the gunners rally out,  
Charge upon the battered door,  
School is called, and battle o'er !

## SCHOOL TIME.

Don't you hear the scholars thrumming,  
Bumble-bees in June ?  
All the leaves together thumbing,  
Like singers hunting for a tune ?  
Master mending pens, and humming  
Bonny Doon ?

As he thinks, a perished maiden  
Fords the brook of song,  
Comes to him so heavy laden,  
Stepping on the notes along,  
Stands beside him, blessed maiden !  
Waited long !

Cherry-ripe the glowing stove,  
Grammar class inflecting "love,"  
"I love— you love, and love we all"—  
Bounding states the Humboldts small,  
Chanting slow in common time,  
Broken China's rugged rhyme :  
"Yang-tse-kiang— Ho-ang-ho—" —  
Heavenly rivers ! How they flow !  
"Dnieper-Dniester"— Russian snow !

Writing class, with heads one way—  
Tongues all out for a holiday!  
Hark, the goose quill's spattering grate,  
Rasping like an awkward skate,  
Swinging round in mighty Bs,  
Lazy Xs, crazy Zs—  
Here a scholar, looking solemn,  
Blunders up a crooked column,—  
Pisa's own Italic tower,  
Done in slate in half an hour,  
Figures piled in mighty sum,  
He wets a finger, down they come!  
Learners in the Rule of Three,  
“I love you, but he loves me!”  
Blue eyes, black eyes, gray eyes, three.

Aproned urchin, aged five,  
Youngest in the humming hive,  
Standing by the master's knee,  
Calls the roll of A, B, C;  
Frightened hair all blown about,  
Buttered lips in half a pout,  
Knuckle boring out an eye,  
Saying “P,” and thinking “pie,”  
Feeling for a speckled bean,  
‘Twixt each breath a dumb ravine,—  
Like clock unwound, but going yet,  
He slowly ticks the alphabet :  
“A-ah—B-ah—C-ah—D,”  
Finds the bean, and calls for ‘E !’

See that crevice in the floor—  
Slender line from desk to door,

First meridian of the school,  
Which all the scholars toe by rule.  
Ranged along in rigid row,  
Inky, golden, brown, and tow,  
Are heads of spellers, high and low,  
Like notes in music sweet as June,  
Dotting off a dancing tune.

Boy of Bashan takes the lead —  
Roughly thatched his bullet head —  
At the foot an eight-year-old  
Stands with head of trembling gold;  
Watch her when the word is missed!  
Her eyes are like an amethyst,  
Her fingers dove-tailed, lips apart,  
She knows that very word by heart!  
Swinging like a pendulum,  
Trembling lest it fail to come.  
Runs the word along the line,  
Like the running of a vine,  
Blossoms out from lip to lip —  
Till the girl in azure slip,  
Catches breath and spells the word,  
Flits up the class like any bird,  
Cheeks in bloom with honest blood,  
And proudly stands where Bashan stood!

Evening reddens on the wall —  
“Attention!” Now — “Obeisance” all!  
The girls’ short dresses touch the floor;  
They drop their court’sies at the door;  
The boys jerk bows with jack-knife springs,  
And out of doors they all take wings!

Sparkling smiles along the line,  
Beads upon the amber wine,  
Sunshine on the river Rhine.  
Broken line and clouded wine,  
Night upon the river Rhine!  
Vanished all—all change is death;  
Life is not the counted breath.  
The slanting sun low in the West  
Brings to the master blessed rest.  
See where it bridges afternoon,  
And slopes the golden day-time down,  
As if to him at last was given,  
An easy grade to restful Heaven!  
His hair is silver—not with light,  
His heart is heavy—not with night;  
Dying day the world has kissed,  
Good-night, sweethearts! The school's dismissed!

#### GOING TO SPELLING SCHOOL.

The broad of a silvery noon!  
And the world lies under the moon,  
Under the moon and the snow;  
The moon comes out from under a cloud  
And shines on the world below—  
The snow, cold-white as a linen shroud  
Put on but an hour ago,  
Is a pearly web with a silver thread,  
Robe for a bridal, and not for the dead.

The river is silent as light,  
The road is a ribbon of white,  
Ribbon of silk from Japan—  
Its borders rich with satin and shine

Betray where the sleigh shoes ran  
That iron the snow to a fabric fine,  
And edged like a lady's fan.  
Ah, the night is fair as a marble girl,  
Dusty with stars and the mother of pearl !

A twanging and trilling of wires !  
Are angels attuning their lyres,  
Tuning with negligent hand ?  
Hark, chimes of bells from over the hills  
Dance merrily through the land —  
The tinkling troll of a hundred rills !  
Cymbals of brass from a band !  
'Tis the ringing strings of the bells in bronze  
Sprinkling the night with their showery tones.

A spell is abroad, and a song,  
The spellers and singers along,  
Wizards and witches by pairs ;  
In cutters snug are the Adams and Eves,  
Eden's own children and heirs !  
Bells in the woods in lieu of the leaves  
And bells that the echo wears —  
It is *ring, ring, ring*, to the swinging gait,  
Then the teams break trot, for the hour is late,  
At a *ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling* rate !

Now over the ridges they ride,  
And down through the valley they glide,  
Bring up at the school-house door,  
With bundled girls in the quilted hood,  
Edging of down, as of yore  
Their hearts as sweet as the cedar wood,

Gowns without gusset or gore,  
Vandykes with a peak before,  
And their hair glossed down like a blackbird's wings,  
And their shoes laced up and with leather strings !

They leap with a laugh to the ground,  
In woolen, all mittenend and gowned,  
Lit up with a ribbon blue,  
A breath of cloves or of sassafras,  
And innocent eyes so true  
That look you back like a looking-glass,  
And cheeks with the roses through —  
All the girls like flowers that are newly blown,  
In the zoneless grace of their "London brown,"  
Not a charm in bonds, nor a beauty laced,  
The cestus of Venus would girdle each waist.

A chorusing crew comes last  
In the family ark of the past,  
Packing it full and in pairs—  
The rude old sleigh, so roomy and red,  
Kitchens not robbed of their chairs,  
But strewn with straw like poverty's bed,  
Millennial lambs in their lairs !  
Like an emigrant ship is the lumbering craft,  
Crowded and laden, both forward and aft,  
With a wooden heart surmounting the stern,  
Where the teamsters old gave the reins a turn—  
Ah, the hearts that throbbed with their youthful blood  
Were as free from care as the sculptured wood !

Oh, fairest of visions below,  
Old covenant ark of the snow,  
Freighted for church at the door !

Two, side by side on the sheep-skin seat,  
Are bound for Canaan's shore,  
The square foot-stove is under their feet,  
A buffalo robe before—  
In the two flag chairs that are side by side,  
Are the gray old man and his silver bride;  
Still she carries one for the added ten,  
May follow the rule and carry again !  
Then the boys and girls in their Sunday clothes,  
And the rank slopes down the farther it goes,  
To three in a row, for the last are least,  
Like the sparks of stars in the early East !  
Ah, the old red sleigh, be it ever blest !  
It has borne the dead to their silent rest,  
The bearers, by twos, as they rode abreast—  
Has carried the brides, their bedding and "things,"  
When the girls were queens and the bridegrooms kings,  
To the splay-foot jog of the olden time,  
And the *clang, clang, clang*, of the sleigh-bells' chime.  
  
Ah, necklace of melody old,  
With apples and walnuts of gold  
That danced to the horses' feet !  
The mother bell in the middle hung,  
As big as a "Golden Sweet,"  
Then small each way till the string was strung,  
And two filbert bells did meet,  
And two rhyming hearts did beat.  
Ah, the beaded bells of the satin street  
That beat the air with their tuneful sleet !  
Ah, the string is dumb, and as green with rust  
As the dimpled graves of the maidens' dust.

## HOW THE BROOK WENT TO MILL.

## I.

A RIFTED rock in a wooded hill,  
A spring within like a looking-glass,  
A nameless rill like a skein of rain  
That showed as faint as a feeble vein,  
And crept away in the tangled grass  
With a voiceless flow and a wandering will—  
The *wish-ton-wish* of a silken dress,  
The murmured tone of a maiden's "yes"!  
A thirsty ox could have quaffed it up,  
A boy dipped dry with a drinking cup !  
Broke in a brook the rill complete—  
Broke in a song the brook so fleet—  
Broke in a laugh the song so sweet !

## II.

'Twas pebble, rubble, and fallen tree,  
'Twas babble, double, through every mile;  
It battled on with a shout and shock,  
And white with foam was the rugged rock,  
And dark were the hemlocks all the while,  
Till the road grew broad and the creek ran free.  
It glassed along on the slippery slide,  
And shot away with an arrowy glide—  
It slipped its shoes, and in stocking feet  
Under the bank and in from the street  
Whirled in a waltz about and out—  
Sprinkled with gold and put to rout—  
And bright with the flash of the spotted trout !

## III.

It floats a name and it bears a boat;  
'Tis Leonard's Creek, and is bound for mill,  
And makes you think, with its ripple and flow—  
So light it trips to the stones below  
The rhythmic touch of the gay quadrille--  
How her fingers went when they moved by note  
Through measures fine, as she marched them o'er  
The yielding plank of the ivory floor.  
Beneath the bridge with a rasping rush,  
A bird takes toll—'tis a thirsty thrush—  
It nears the gulf of the hemlock night  
Where stars shine down in the midday light,  
It verges the brink of the shadow's lair,  
Stumbles and falls on the limestone stair!  
Clings to the mute and motionless edge—  
Tumbles and booms from ledge to ledge—  
Thunders and blunders down to the sedge !

## THE MILLER AND THE MILL.

A RIVER and a brook ran across my boyhood's world; lively fellows they were, and things to thank God for. The one rambled through pastures and meadows, among the buttercups and strawberries, and turned shingle wheels and floated boats that suggested the slipper of Cinderella, and wet boys' feet and their trowsers withal, even to the waistbands, glassed out in the spring rains like the Zuider Zee, and submitted to be dammed without a murmur. The other rattled down the roughest, crookedest piece of road you ever saw, and quarreled with banks and wrangled with rocks and foamed over fallen logs as green as lizards, and plunged into hemlock shadows it never could get rid of, slipped over the broad

flat pavements and tumbled down stairs at last at the foot of the mill. The old mill with its rumble and grumble, its ghostly corners, its powdery floors, and its dim, gray look, as if lost in a fog that never lifts, is there yet, rumbling and grumbling still. It hums like a king bee in the nest of a village. The great wheel in its damp dungeon below day-time, gives way as of old beneath the tread of water, like a flight of stairs forever tumbling down.

The mill was our only enchanted castle, and nobody has ruined it by improvement. As of old,

"Water runneth by the mill  
The miller wots not of."

What treasures of childhood came home in the grists; the turn-over bundled in a coverlid, tucked in with a thumb, and plump with happiness; the golden samp; the corner lot of Johnny-cake; the acrobatic flap jack, and the twisted doughnut. But the charm of them has vanished. Happiness is rarer and costlier. The old miller has laid off his dusty clothes for garments of white, and strange hands take toll.

#### THE MILLER AND THE MILL.

##### I.

THE roar came up in a misty cloak  
Whose skirt was trimmed with the swan's-down  
foam.

Beside the mill with its window'd wall  
Of rusty red as it loomed so tall.

The wheel was still in its dank, dim room,  
The air as whist as a wreath of smoke,  
The tangled light through the cobwebs fell,  
The mill was as dumb as a heather-bell !  
The dusty miller was leaning o'er  
The lower half of the battened door,  
Thinking the things he always thought,

Tolling the grist no man had brought,  
Counting the dreams that came to nought.

## II.

He saw four butterflies winged in white  
That fluttered over the wayside pool,  
They look like bits of an old love-note  
To Lucy Jones, and the first he wrote  
But never sent to the Flower of school.  
“What if he had?” and “Perhaps she might!”  
He saw four butterflies winged in gold  
And thought what things the “perhaps” might fold:  
A woman’s foot on the powdered sill  
With arch enough for a running rill,  
To walk his world and—he thought again  
How blossoms show in the route of rain—  
Make summer time till the first snow-fall.  
Perhaps and Might! How they puzzle all!  
Jogging along a horse came slow,  
Boy was aloft and bag below,  
Calliper legs and head of tow.

## III.

The miller starts from the faded dream,  
A lever creaks, and he lifts the gate.  
The rumbling flood in the frothy flume  
Is rolling through to the twilight room  
In whirls and swirls at a reckless rate  
The rustic strength of the headlong stream.  
A storm of rain in the chamber dim:  
A mighty swing of a giant limb;  
The wheel is washing his naked arms;  
The mill is alive with the strange alarms;  
A lazy log has just turned over.

The mill is full of a thousand things,  
They tramp with feet and they hum with wings—  
A troop has halted awhile to feed,  
Old Pan has come with his drowsy reed.

Hark ! Bees abroad from a field of clover.  
A flock of grouse with a frightened whir,  
A Scotch brigade with a Tweedside burr.

Two wheels lay hold with their iron teeth  
And turn a shaft that is hung beneath,  
With a jumbling thump of the tumbling bolt,  
Like the awkward trot of a barefoot colt;  
In swaying glide are the leathern bands,  
The hoppers jar with their palsied hands,  
Forever spilling the grists of grain  
In rattling showers like frozen rain,  
While face to face with its gritty mate  
The millstone whirls with a grinding grate.  
What might be laid in a castle's wall  
Is twirled as light as a parasol !

And out from the rock, as once of old,  
A streamlet flows in its white or gold.

Busy as bees when the buckwheat blows  
Are the little buckets that run in rows  
Up stairs and down with a sparrow's weight,  
A tiny drift of the dainty freight.  
The place is thrilled with a rumbling tread,  
The air is gray with the ghost of bread.  
Dizzy and busy, above, below,  
Lydian river and floury flow,  
Corn in the gold and wheat in the snow.

## *THE PSALM BOOK IN THE GARRET.*

### IV.

The old gray mill is yet murmuring on,  
The brook brawls down through the limestone  
street,  
The girls that blossomed around the door  
And hid and sought till the grist-snowed floor  
Was printed off with their merry feet  
Like notes of music—the girls are gone !  
The miller said that he always heard  
The slender song of the outside bird  
Through the grumbling roll of the whirling mill,  
He never heard when the wheels were still.  
Perhaps—why not?—through the anthem grand  
He helps to chant in the better land,  
The mill's old murmuring monotone  
May now steal up to his ear alone,  
Bringing a breath of the Saviour's Prayer—  
Droning the base to the angels' air—  
Hum of the Mill in the golden choir.

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## *THE PSALM BOOK IN THE GARRET.*

THE old garret, with one almond eye in each gable, was the memory of the homestead. The fashions of three generations, the bits of ancient furniture that somehow grew akin to them that used it, the rusty red cradle, the rush-bottomed chair, the long-handled warming-pan, the little foot stove with a bail to it, the flaring leghorn, the bell-crowned beaver, the leather-bound book, the wheel, the reel, the distaff, and the swifts—these, and a thousand things besides, may be forgotten below stairs, but they are sure to be remembered above. You can find them swung to the peak of the rafters, or chucked under the eaves,

or strown along the oaken plate. They are all there. When I hear of the burning of an old mansion, I do not ask if they saved the silver, but did salvation reach the garret?

The long-winged psalm book, "sung in" by people whose graves are hard to find, lies upon a beam, and beside it a withered, dusty bundle of summer savory that nobody remembers. A little way off is a wooden pitch-pipe about the color of a chestnut, that used to go a couple of seconds ahead of Braintree and the rest, and blow like a disconsolate wind at a key hole.

But the world will keep the old tunes without the help of garrets. Nobody ever thinks in "the dead waste and middle of" December that there can ever be another blue bird. But there can, and there will. When "the winter is over and gone" he is sure to drop out of the blue like a winged atom of live sky. So with the old tunes. They have a way of dying out of hearing now and then, but, for all that, they will meet us here and there on the way. St. Martin's, St. Thomas, and St. Mary's are about as immortal as St. Matthew, St. Paul, and St. John. Let us amend the beatitude of Christopher North, and say, "Blessed be the memory of old songs and old singers forever!"

#### THE PSALM BOOK IN THE GARRET.

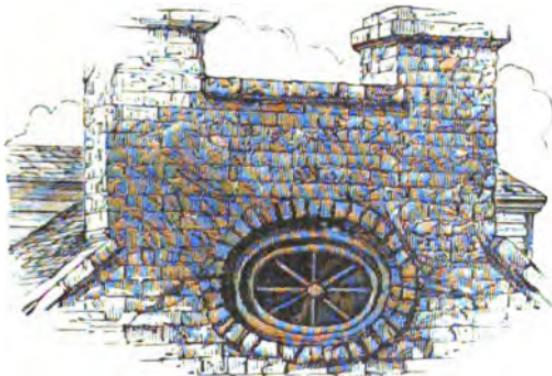
A GARRET grows a human thing,  
With lonely oriental eyes,  
To whom confiding fingers bring  
The world in yesterday's disguise.

Ah, richer far than noon tide blaze  
The soft gray silence of the air,  
As if long years of ended days  
Had garnered all their twilights there.

The heart can see so clear and far  
In such a place, with such a light—

God counts His heavens star by star,  
And rains them down unclouded night.

Where rafters set their cobwebb'd feet  
Upon the rugged oaken ledge,  
I found a flock of singers sweet,  
Like snow-bound sparrows in a hedge.



In silk of spider's spinning hid,  
A long and narrow psalm book lay;  
I wrote a name upon the lid,  
Then brushed the idle dust away.

Ah, dotted tribe with ebon heads,  
That climb the slender fence along !  
As black as ink, as thick as weeds,  
Ye little Africans of song !

Who wrote upon this page "Forget  
Me Not?" These cruel leaves of old  
Have crushed to death a violet —  
See here its spectre's pallid gold.

A pencilled whisper during prayer  
 Is that poor, dim, and girlish word;  
 But ah, I linger longest where  
 It opens of its own accord.

These spotted leaves! How once they basked  
 Beneath the glance of girlhood's eyes,  
 And parted to the gaze unasked,  
 As spread the wings of butterflies.



The book falls open where it will—  
 Broad on the page runs Silver Street,  
 That shining way to Zion's Hill,  
 Where base and treble used to meet.

I shake the leaves. They part at Mear—  
 Again they strike the good old tune,  
 The village church is builded here,  
 The twilight turns to afternoon.

Old house of Puritanic wood,  
Through whose unpainted windows streamed  
On seats as primitive and rude  
As Jacob's pillow when he dreamed,

The white and undiluted day !  
Thy naked aisle no roses grace  
That blossomed at the shuttle's play;  
Nor saints distempered bless the place.

Like feudal castles, front to front,  
In timbered oak of Saxon Thor,  
To brave the siege and bear the brunt  
Of Bunyan's endless Holy War,

The pulpit and the gallery stand —  
Between the twain a peaceful space,  
The prayer and praise on either hand,  
And girls and Gospel face to face.

I hear the reverend Elder say,  
“*Hymn fifty-first, long metre, sing !*”  
I hear the psalm-books' fluttered play,  
Like flocks of sparrows taking wing.

Armed with a fork to pitch the tune,  
I hear the Deacon call “*Dundee !*”  
And mount as brisk as Bonny Doon  
His “ Fa, sol, la,” and scent the key.

He “ trees ” the note for sister Gray;  
The old Scotch warbling strains begin;  
The base of Bashan leads the way,  
And all the girls fall sweetly in.

How swells the hymn of heavenly love,  
As rise the tides in Fundy's Bay,  
Till all the air below, above,  
Is sweet with song and — caraway !

A fugue let loose cheers up the place,  
With base, and tenor, alto, air;  
The parts strike in with measured grace,  
And something sweet is everywhere.

As if some warbling brood should build  
Of bits of tunes a singing nest,  
Each bring the notes with which it thrilled,  
And weave them in with all the rest !

The congregation rise and stand;  
Old Hundred's rolling thunder comes  
In heavy surges, slow and grand,  
As beats the surf its solemn drums.

Now come the times when China's wail  
Is blended with the faint perfume  
Of whispering crape and cloudy veil,  
That fold within their rustling gloom

Some wounded human mourning-dove,  
And fall around some stricken one  
With nothing left alive to love  
Below the unregarded sun !

And now they sing a star in sight,  
The blessed Star of Bethlehem;  
And now the air is royal bright  
With Coronation's diadem.

They show me spots of dimpled sod,  
They say the girls of old are there —  
Oh, no, they swell the choirs of God,  
The dear old songs are everywhere !

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## DANIEL WEBSTER'S PLOW.

AT THE CENTENNIAL EXPOSITION.

A  
MID the treasures strewn around  
Like trophies of dismantled climes,  
I saw the king of things uncrowned,  
The triumph of the earlier times —  
A ponderous, huge, unpainted plow,  
All stained with storms of rain and snow,  
With beam that might have been a ram —  
Of plows it surely was no lamb —  
And battered down the walls of Rome,  
And drove her golden eagles home !  
It stood and touched the magic place  
With something like a classic grace.  
Upon it were the printed words  
That Webster said : " Behind this plow,  
And twelve great oxen on before,  
I feel my manhood mount and glow,  
As never on the Senate's floor!"

I thought I heard the songs of birds  
That dined along the trench he made,  
And followed up the gleaming blade;  
I thought I heard the ringing lash,  
A pistol-shot without the flash;

I thought I saw his twelve-in-hand  
Break up old Marshfield's grassy land,  
And put to rout the camps of clover;  
The shining soil roll out to light,  
Like drowsy giants turning over;  
And heard the plowman's voice of might,  
That rang around the Babel earth  
From thane and throne to hovel hearth,  
With, "Constitution — Union — Law,"  
Cry to his swinging yokes, "Whoa, haw!"  
Nay, never dream that any hand  
Can glorify the battered plow;  
Its touch inspires the desert land,  
Its fields are Plenty's battle grounds,  
Its bouts are empire's noblest bounds,  
Its guides are Freedom's body-guard,  
It needs a Homer for a bard!  
Without it what were kingdoms now?  
If I could choose between the twain,  
Think out the plow within my brain,  
And give it royally to man,  
Or "Paradise" by grand old John,  
I'd say, let Milton sing right on,  
I'll make the plow, and lead the van!

## THE OLD STATE ROAD.

THE old State Road from Utica, New York, to Lake Ontario, was, like Jordan, a "hard road to travel." Macadamized with rocks that never felt a hammer; bordered with boulders and mayweed in summer, and in winter with drifts of snow that left the country as fenceless as the Arctic Ocean; rising and falling with the high hills and the deep valleys like a tremendous sea; the most like a liquid when it had a solid's three dimensions,—length, breadth, and thickness,—with all this, it had a charm for "us boys" that the Appian Way or the sheep paths up the Hill of Science never possessed, for it led out into the unseen world, and people went by stage—the yellow, egg-shaped, rollicking coach that smelled of tar, leather, buffalo robes, and reeking horses, but then no triumphal chariot of classic story was ever half so grand.

Of that road John Benjamin, Driver, was hero and king. The breadth of his realm was as far as he could see on both sides of the way, and his subjects were all the people. His name, as here given, is exactly half true, and that is about all we can say of most history. A genial, hearty, tough fellow was John Benjamin. A reinsman without a master, he could get more volleys of small-arms out of the farther end of a whip-lash and a skein of silk than any man going; he could turn a straight tin horn into a key bugle; he believed in oats, and next to a matched and mettled four-in-hand, he admitted that man was the noblest animal on earth. He knew everybody, and was not above a nod to little boys, and a smile for slips of girls, even if he could count their toes any summer day as they stood by the road side. A man might be forgiven for being unacquainted with Apollo, Jehu, or Palinurus, but not with John Benjamin. Not a lad in the country but meant to be a man and a driver himself. Not a lass but wished she could ride in John Benjamin's coach on her wedding day.

The coaches are all wrecked. The drivers are all gone; but

the stage road remains. I got glimpses of it a while ago, as I went scurrying along by rail, and of dilapidated stage houses, as gray as wasps' nests, and as empty as martin boxes in midwinter. "So runs the world away!"

#### THE OLD STATE ROAD.

CUT through the green wilderness down to the ground,  
Straight over the hills by the route of the crow,  
Now black as the bird, where the hemlocks abound,  
Then through the dim pines, half as white as the snow,  
By a cataract's track sunk away to the gulf  
That yawned grim and dark as the mouth of a wolf,  
Up hill and down dale like the trail of a brave,  
From Mohawk's wet marge to Ontario's wave,  
When the world was in forest, the hamlet in grove,  
Ran the stormy State Road where old Benjamin drove.

The rude, rugged bridges all growled at the stage,  
The rough, rolling ridges all gave it a lift,  
You read off the route like a line on a page,  
Then dropped out of day into twilight and rift !

Through the sloughs of October it heavily rolled,  
And lurched like a ship that is mounting a sea,  
O'er rattling macadams of torrents untold,  
Now in silence and sand midway to the knee.

It visioned the night with its yellow-eyed lamps  
Like creatures that prowl out of gun-shot of camps,  
When plunging along in the gloom of the swamps,  
With halt, jolt, and thump, and the driver's "ahoy!"  
It struck with a bounce on the ribbed corduroy,  
And from hemlock to hemlock, log in and log out,  
The coach jumped and jounced in a trip-hammer bout—

Through Gothic old chasms that swallowed the night,  
Out into the clearings all golden with light,  
Where flocks of white villages lay in the grass,  
And watched for the stage and its cargo to pass.

JOHN BENJAMIN, DRIVER.

The boys and the girls all abroad in high feather,  
The heads of the horses all tossing together,  
Flinging flakes of white foam like snow in wild weather,  
All swinging their silk like tassels of corn,  
'Twas Benjamin's time! And he whipped out the horn!  
'Twas the drone of king bees, and a myriad strong—  
'Twas *fanfare!* and *fanfare!* with a bugle's prolong,  
*Chanticleer!* *Chan-ti-clear!* I am coming along!

The bellows dropped down with a vanishing snore,  
The smith in black crayon gave the anvil the floor,  
And leaned on his sledge in the cave of a door;  
The landlord in slippers cut away at the heel  
Shuffled out on the stoop at the rattle of wheel,  
*Click-click*—went the gates, and like yarn from a reel,  
Smiling women wound out and looked down the street,  
Where the driver swung plumb in his oriole seat,  
The mail, chained and padlocked, tramped under his feet.

He tightens the reins, and whirls off with a fling  
From the roof of the coach his ten feet of string;  
The invisible fireworks rattle and ring,  
Torpedoes exploding in front and in rear,  
A Fourth of July every day in the year!  
Now lightly he flicks the "nigh" leader's left ear,  
Gives the wheelers a neighborly slap with the stock,  
They lay back their ears as the coach gives a rock,  
And strike a square trot in the tick of a clock!

There's a jumble, a jar, and a gravelly trill  
In the craunch of the wheels on the slate-stone hill  
That grind up the miles like a grist in a mill.  
He touches the bay and he talks to the brown,  
Sends a token of silk, a word, and a frown  
To the filly whose heels are too light to stay down.

Clouds of dust roll behind with two urchins inside  
That tow by the straps, as the jolly-boats ride,  
From the boot rusty-brown, like an elephant's hide.  
With a sharp jingling halt he brings up at the door,  
A surge to the coach like a ship by the shore,  
He casts off the lines, and his journey is o'er.

If king were to banter, would Benjamin trade  
His box for a knighthood, his whip for the blade  
That should make him Sir John by some grand accolade?

Ah, few whips alive in their cleverest mood  
Can write with a coach as old Benjamin could,  
And you ought to have seen the sixteen feet  
With their iron shoes on the stricken stone  
When they waltzed around in the narrow street  
To a time and a tune that were all their own,  
Like the short, sharp clicks of the castanet  
By the Moorish girls in a dancing set,  
When, as free as the sweep of a wizard's wand,  
Right-about with a dash came the four-in-hand !  
'Twas crackle of buckskin and sparkle of fire  
And never a rasp of a grazing tire,  
As he cut a clean 6 and swept a bold 8,  
Like a boy that is trying his brand-new slate !

## JOHN BENJAMIN'S PICTURE.

I see him to-day all equipped for the snow  
    In a wonderful coat that falls to his heels,  
With its ripple of capes on his shoulders a-flow  
    And a plump visored cap that once was a seal's  
Drawn snug to his eyebrows down over his head !  
    In gloves of tough buckskin so wrinkled and brown,  
With muffler begirt, an equator of red !  
    A shawl round his neck like a turban slipped down;  
A couple of cubs are his buffalo shoes  
Asleep on the mail-bag that carries the news.  
All through of a size, in his Esquimaux guise,  
    He read off the road and he breasted the storm,  
No sign of the man but his hands and his eyes,  
    His heart below frost—ah! it always kept warm.  
“Afraid!” If bright Phœbus had told him to try  
His horses of fire down the steep of the sky,  
With the motto *Ich dien*—I faithfully serve—  
He would grasp the gold reins, no falter of nerve,  
And, foot on the brake, he would drive down the blue  
Without breaking an axle or losing a shoe!  
A touch of Northeasters had frosted his tones—  
    He always must talk so his leaders could hear—  
Ah, men preach from grand pulpits and sit upon thrones  
    Whose vision of duty was never so clear!  
He loved the old route with its hemlock and rock,  
    Its sprinkle of mayweed, the breath of his hills,  
The girls trailing out in bare feet from the flock  
That ran alongside when the horses would walk,  
    Till they wore a small path like the travel of rills!  
Ah, Hero of boyhood! Asleep in thy grave,  
    Last station of all on humanity's route,

In measureless peace where the Lombardies wave,  
But time and its tempests have blotted it out.  
I letter his name on the way bill of death  
To tell who he was that is waiting beneath:

Good night to John Benjamin, king of the road !  
Who sleeps till the blast of the bugle of God.  
In feverish noon, on the highway of strife,  
Make the driver's old rule the law of your life:  
Keep the track if you can, but midday or midnight,  
Whatever you do, always turn to the right !

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#### A VISION OF HANDS.

**A**Y, give all honor to the man  
Whose sturdy work sweats off the tan,  
Who furrows out the royal road  
Where broad-tread harvests march abreast  
In rustling robe and golden vest,  
And gains his bread first-hand from God;  
Lives hand and glove with out-door life,  
Lives hand in hand with faithful wife,  
Strikes hands with earnest men who strive  
To keep both soil and soul alive;  
Who does his duty out of hand  
And tills his heart and feeds his land;  
Is hand to hand against the wrong,  
And sometimes, tallest when he kneels,  
Will lend a hand to roll the wheels  
Of manful, mindful toil along.

There is a stain, but not of dust,  
That soils a hand beyond repair,

The “damned spot” of broken trust;  
    There is a fairer hand than fair,  
There is a shapelier hand than Burns  
    Has sung. It may be broad and brown,  
        And knotty as an antlered crown—  
The open hand that never turns  
    Its back when need is at the door;  
The hand that feels the left-breast knock  
    Like flails upon a threshing floor,  
And closes like the Arab rock  
    And strikes for undefended right,  
With soul and sinew tense and tight,  
Straight out, and smites Goliah down—  
I think that hand has won renown;  
Might touch and grace a kingly crown.

The plighted hand that glances white;  
The royal hand with diamond light;  
The gentle hand that cools the brow  
    Like whispers from the fragrant snow  
        Of orchards blossoming in May;  
The artist hand that halts the sun  
    To dawn along the canvas gray;  
The hand whose tuneful fingers run  
    Along the strings as zephyrs play  
And float the soul on some sweet dream  
    Of peace for which we ever pray;  
The cunning hands that delegate  
To nerves of fire and pulsing steam,  
    To lively valve and nimble wheel,  
To things that never want nor wait,  
    To things that never lie nor steal,  
Alive as life, and trained and taught

The work by human sinews wrought—  
Ah, all these hands are wondrous fair,  
And yet, recounting all, I dare

To toast the Farmers' hands that kept  
The wolf and wilderness at bay

Where Pilgrims' bristling winters slept,  
And shaggy, white-maned lions lay;

Who picked the flint and picked the flint  
For Indian corn and Indian foes,  
And cleared the cabins and the rows

Of weeds and wampum by the dint  
Of rude flintlocks and rugged hoes.

The hands that fired the morning gun  
Of Freedom when the world struck "one,"  
And dug their rations as they went  
And left the Lord to pitch their tent,  
Were farmers' sons. I rather think  
They stood so close to glory's brink  
That, one step more, they would have seen  
Headquarters of the sons of men.

Twins of the million hands that donned

The hickory shirts and blouses blue,  
And marched "with equal step" beyond

The solemn dead-lines duty drew;  
When soulless reapers took the field,  
And tireless threshers smote the grain,  
And speechless mowers swept the swath  
While gallant squadrons charged and wheeled,  
And bolts of thunder struck the plain,  
And batteries tore a ragged path  
Through solid columns massed amain  
And mowed the human aftermath,

And Blue and Gray alternate reeled  
And Gray and Blue alternate kneeled  
    Along the road of wreck and wrath.  
The sun set red, as if he wrought  
    The bloody work he looked upon;  
The moon rose white, as if she caught  
    The pallid stare on which she shone  
Of dead men's faces turned supine  
And broken pitchers stained with wine.

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### THE CIDER MILL.

"**I**MPROVEMENT" puts old times to rout  
    And crushes fragrant meanings out  
Like apples in a cider mill,  
When creaks the screw and runs the rill,  
And gives us pomace in the place  
Of what had once exceeding grace.  
Ah, cider mill in clapboard cloak,  
    A brimless roof above the screw,  
A mighty minute-hand of oak  
    That round and round the horses drew,  
While our hands caught the amber flow  
That tinkled fitfully below,  
Where came the dissipated bees  
    With drowsy talk and woolen legs,  
And swarthy wasps like Turkish Begs,  
And ten-toed boys about "the cheese,"  
With oaten straws and tattered knees.

## HEARTS AND HEARTHS.

THERE was a time when hearths and hearts  
In rural life were counterparts—  
The only neutral ground of grace  
In all this troubled world. Would I  
Could paint the homely picture right,  
The low-browed dwelling's altar-place  
Forever lost, forever nigh—  
Paint the divergent rays that shed  
Along the dark their lines of light  
Like nimbus round a sacred head.  
There, sturdy fire-dogs, legs apart,  
Upheld that glowing work of art  
The beech-and-maple kitchen fire,  
The twinkling, crinkling, creeping fire  
That gives a flash and shows a spire;  
One instant builds a phoenix nest,  
Another, mounts a gleaming crest,  
A *feu-de-joie*, it shoots a jet,  
Up comes a crimson minaret;  
The flame is fanned, the blaze is blown,  
You hear a mill-flume's undertone—  
The rattling, battling, roaring fire,  
With flapping flags and lapping tongues  
That purrs and burrs with lion's lungs,  
Expands the ring of kitchen chairs,  
And brightens up the brow of cares.

The coals of rubies fall apart,  
Lo, secrets of a burning heart:  
The embers show a valentine,  
Dead faces smile, lost castles shine,

And pansies blow, and eglantine,  
And old gold beads and rings of price  
And buds and birds of Paradise.  
A soft red twilight charms the room  
And fills it like a faint perfume.  
There, couples sat the night away  
Whist as a buttonhole bouquet —  
Some russets roasting in a row,  
Some talking flames that "told of snow,"  
Some cider that her hands had drawn,  
Two pairs of lips, a single cup,  
Both kissed the brim and drank it up.

The candle has its night-cap on,  
The very embers gone to bed —  
Who shall record what either said?  
Or who so eloquent can tell  
How early apples used to smell?  
The woodsy, evanescent taste  
Of berries plucked with eager haste,  
As through the meadow lands they crept,  
And fingers touched and fancy woke  
And never slumbered, never slept  
Till day on life's sweet dreamings broke?  
The pious clock a murmur made,  
Held up both hands before its face,  
Not meant so much for twelve o'clock,  
But just astonishment and shock  
At such a want of modest grace,  
For up the sweetheart sprang, and laid  
A muffling finger on the bell,  
Lest the shrill steel should strike and tell,  
And gave the hands a backward whirl,

Took time "on tick," the reckless girl !  
Where is the lover? Old and lone.  
And where the maiden? Gray and gone.  
I read the dim *Italic* stone :  
    A willow tree, a "Sacred To"—  
The sad old story, ever new,  
For all the twain the world moves on.

I saw a spider drift about  
    Upon the sun-shot morning air,  
        As if like thistle blossoms blown  
            At random, desolate and strown,  
                Now here and there and everywhere,  
                    And all the while that aeronaut  
                        Was paying nature's life-line out !  
I traced it by the nervous thread  
    Back to its little silken lair,  
        Safe hid in a verbena bed.  
It never cut that cable fine,  
    But felt its home along the line.  
And then I thought, and then I said,  
    Our life-line is the love of home,  
        Oh, make it fast where'er you roam—  
            Amid the rough world's rolling strife,  
                        It is the anchorage of life.

## POEMS OF TIMES AND SEASONS.

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### A WINTER PSALM.

**A** SONG for the meek old mountains—the mountains grand and strong,  
That lifted winter clear of earth all spring and summer long,  
And made it gay with evergreen, and then with one accord  
They shouldered the snows in silence and stood before the Lord.  
  
They did it for the roses' sake—that robins might be born,  
And Indian gold might flash along the rank and file of corn,  
And sheafy wigwam everywhere lift up its tawny cone,  
And Rachel sing the harvest-home where harvest moons had shone;  
They did it for the little graves—bade flowers and children say,  
We'll smile together by and by, and fill the world with May!  
  
Well done for the grim old mountains! And well for the king who laid  
Upon their shoulders stout and brave his gold and crimson blade.

'Twas meet that the princely Morning, with banners all unfurled,  
Should knight them with his royal touch across the blushing world.

As softly as on mountain air beatitudes were shed,  
As gently as the lilies bud among the words He said,  
So did the dear old mountains lay the sparkling winter down  
Upon the poor dumb bosom of a world so bare and brown —  
So noiselessly and silently, such radiance and rest !.  
As if a snowy wing should fold upon a sparrow's breast.

Far through the dim uncertain air, as still as asters blow,  
The downy, drowsy feet untold tread out the world we know;  
Upon the pine's green fingers set, flake after flake they land,  
And flicker with a feeble light amid the shadowy band;  
Upon the meadows broad and brown where maids and mowers sung;  
Upon the meadows gay with gold the dandelions flung;  
Upon the farm-yard's homely realm, on ricks and rugged bars,  
Till riven oak and strawy heap were domes and silver spars;  
The cottage was an eastern dream with alabaster eaves,  
And lilacs growing round about with diamonds for leaves;  
The well-sweep gray above the roof a silver accent stood,  
And silver willows wept their way to meet a silver wood;

The russet groves had blossomed white and budded  
full with stars,  
The fences were in uniform, the gate posts were hussars;  
The chimneys were in turbans all, with plumes of  
crimson smoke,  
And the costly breaths were silver when the laughing  
children spoke;  
And gem and jewel everywhere along the tethers strung  
Where mantling roses once had climbed, and morning  
glories swung.  
So through the dim, uncertain air, as still as asters blow,  
The downy, drowsy feet untold tread out the world we  
know.

The glimmer of the violet's eye goes out beneath their  
tread,  
White silence lines the ringing street and drifts around  
the dead,  
But more than all they trample out the crooked paths  
of men,  
And make the stained and wrinkled world all clean and  
young again !  
The summer rain hath won sweet song from many a  
tuneful soul  
Since God did paint day's alphabet upon the cloudy  
scroll,  
But who for the snow shall give us one grand angelic  
psalm,  
The beautiful feet of the snow — the feet so pure and  
calm ?  
Thanks be to God for winter time! That bore the  
Mayflower up,

To pour amid New England snows the treasures of its cup,  
To fold them in its icy arms, those sturdy Pilgrim sires,  
And weld an iron brotherhood around their Christmas fires!  
Thanks be to God for winter time! How strong the pulses play,  
And ah, the pulses of the bells are not less sweet than they!  
Dear heart of winter, throb again with old melodious beat,  
Around thy glow forever heard the play of childhood's feet,  
Worn smooth and beautiful the Rock where later pilgrims come  
To harvest all their loves and hopes around the hearth of home!

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## OCTOBER.

### I.

I WOULD not die in May:  
When orchards drift with blooms of white like billows on the deep,  
And whispers from the lilac bush across my senses sweep,  
That 'mind me of a girl I knew when life was always May,  
Who filled my nights with starry hopes that faded out by day—  
When time was full of wedding-days, and nests of robins brim,

Till overflows their wicker sides the old familiar  
hymn —  
The window brightens like an eye, the cottage doors  
swing wide,  
The boys come homeward, one by one, and bring a  
smiling bride,  
The fire-fly shows her signal light, the partridge beats  
his drum,  
And all the world gives promise of something sweet  
to come —

Ah, who would die on such a day ?  
Ah, who would die in May ?

## II.

I would not die in June :  
When looking up with faces quaint the pansies grace  
the sod,  
And looking down, the willows see their doubles in the  
flood —  
When blessing God, we breathe again the roses in the  
air,  
And lilies light the fields along with their immortal  
wear  
As once they lit the Sermon of the Saviour on the  
Mount,  
And glorified the story they evermore recount --  
Through pastures blue the flocks of God go trooping  
one by one,  
And turn their golden fleeces round to dry them in the  
sun —  
When calm as Galilee the grain is rippling in the wind,  
And nothing dying anywhere but something that has  
sinned —

Ah, who would die in life's own noon?  
Ah, who would die in June?

## III.

But when OCTOBER comes,  
And poplars drift their leafage down in flakes of gold  
below,  
And beeches burn like twilight fires that used to tell of  
snow,  
And maples bursting into flame set all the hills afire,  
And summer from her evergreens sees Paradise draw  
nigher—  
A thousand sunsets all at once distil like Hermon's dew,  
And linger on the waiting woods and stain them through  
and through,  
As if all earth had blossomed out, one grand Corin-  
thian flower,  
To crown time's graceful capital for just one gorgeous  
hour.  
They strike their colors to the king of all the stately  
throng—  
He comes in pomp, October! To him all times belong.  
The frost is on his sandals, but the flush is on his  
cheeks,  
September sheaves are in his arms, June voices when he  
speaks—  
The elms lift bravely like a torch within a Grecian hand,  
See where they light the monarch on through all the  
splendid land.  
The sun puts on a human look behind the hazy fold.  
The mid-year moon of silver is struck anew in gold,  
In honor of the very day that Moses saw of old,  
For in the Burning Bush that blazed as quenchless as a  
sword,

The old lieutenant first beheld October and the Lord.

Ah, then, October let it be—

I'll claim my dying day from thee.

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### JUNE.

THE world is in June and it ripples in rhyme—  
June! Sweetheart of life and own darling of time.  
The year, with glad laughter, plays truant to death,  
Goes back so near Eden she catches its breath,  
And follows that airy old fashion of Eve's,  
And rustles abroad in an apron of leaves!  
She holds her cheek long to the kiss of the sun,  
Days widen and warm like some volume begun,  
Narrow night like a ribbon just marking the page  
Where some eloquent thought shall last out the age.  
Every bush has a blossom, a bee, or a bird,  
A beauty to blow or a hum to be heard—  
Battalions of legs—all eyes or all stings—  
And billions of monsters, mosquitoes, and “things,”  
And needles like cherubs, with nothing but wings.  
There's a promise to plead or a bill to present,  
A grave to be opened, a shroud to be rent,  
For they rise without trump; resurrections in June  
Are as blithe as the lark and as bonny as Doon.  
From the tick of a heart in the breast of a wren  
To the trumpets that make Agamemnons of men—  
From the teardrop that trembles unflash'd from its brim,  
To the surly old storm that rolls over earth's rim,  
Tramples out the white stars as daisies are trod,  
While its red plumage shakes with the drum beat of God,  
Till green world and blue world by tempest are riven

And the lightning's dread squadrons charge right up to  
Heaven,

As Sheridan went — as if grim Mission Ridge  
With its arches of fire were the pier of a bridge  
Somebody had built to the gates of the sky  
And he bound to go up without waiting to die —  
Everything, everywhere, struggling up in the strife,  
Is beginning to climb that strange ladder of life,  
With an angel alight on its uppermost round  
And an atom alive where it touches the ground;  
From the blue music box of the robin's old wife  
A burglar breaks through into mansions of life.

Hearts are trumps here in June : heart of lion and lark,  
Heart of Richard and Rachel and Joan of Arc;  
Heart of iron and oak, steady, sturdy, and true,  
When through lines of red fire broke the jackets of blue;  
A world of life's rivers all ebbing and flowing,  
A world full of hearts like hammers all going,  
Yet instead of our hearing these drummers of wonder,  
With their ruffle and roll pulsing out into thunder,  
The earth is, for all of this turbulent crowd,  
As still as a star, or the shape in a shroud.

I think it was June when the maiden looked down  
On the dear little Moses just ready to drown,  
And, his basket of bulrushes rocked by the Nile,  
That Columbus of Canaan looked up with a smile.

When summer's green surges roll over the land  
Till you hardly can tell as they break on the strand,  
Where this world doth end or the other begin,  
They so hide all the graves, the first footprints of sin,  
Is it strange that earth's singers should drift out of June,

As if lifted by chance on the swell of a tune,  
And fairly float over life's musical bars,  
When the birds can go with them half way to the stars?  
So went Sontag and Weber — magnificent pair —  
He was clerk to the angels and she sang in the choir;  
He recorded in score, but she passed down the word  
Till a turbulent world grew human, and heard.  
Ah, talk of the eye unsleeping, unweeping,  
Undaunted, undying, its watch and ward keeping,  
To whose glance telescopic raveled midnight is given —  
You can see to Orion, but you *hear* into heaven!

So went they in June who, with wonderful art,  
Put in English and rhythm the beat of the heart —  
The bard of Sweet Hope, and the bard of Sweet Home.  
They wronged thee, oh Sexton! They tenant no tomb,  
For Campbell shall live when the tartan is dim,  
And Payne walk the world that is chanting his hymn.

How came they in June who the rainbow unbent,  
And laid it alive on the fold of a tent;  
With fingers immortal the curtain withdrew,  
And the canvas was kindled, and faces looked through —  
Lips ruddy and ripe with the old loving glow  
Somebody was kissing three ages ago!  
So Rubens, June-born, the grand master of art,  
With a nerve in his pencil strung straight from his heart,  
At whose touch the Evangelists gave Calvary up,  
The Christ, and the cross, and the crown, and the cup —  
And Hebrew and Greek fell away from the story,  
And left it sublime in its gloom and its glory!

And that Spaniard, June-born, whose fame shed a gleam  
Ere Plymouth had pilgrim, or Bunyan a dream —

With no drop of blue blood in breast or in brain,  
By a right far diviner than Philip's of Spain,  
Was own king of colors — whose banners so brave  
Never lowered unto death, never struck to the grave;  
Pride and pomp of the realm, the Armada went down,  
Cleared the face of the sea like a vanishing frown,  
But some child that he painted, its journey undone,  
Makes the transit of ages as Venus the sun !

Christ lay in thy manger, oh, fairest of stars !  
June rocks in thy cradle, oh, brighter than Mars —  
God walked in thy garden — man sprung from thy dust —  
Ah, who would not hold thy grand story in trust,  
That no blade would be wielded, nor battle be born,  
But the green waving sabres by ranks of young corn ?  
Yet what broods of grim thunders have nested in June,  
Swooped from eyries of blue in the broad summer noon,  
Splashed the greenest sod red with the color of fame,  
Flared the flags into flower with their breathings of  
flame,  
And growled the world dumb — all its eloquent words,  
The laugh of its girls, and the songs of its birds.  
Marengo roars down the long highway sublime,  
'Tis the Corsican clocks striking Bonaparte's time — .  
The grumble of guns that had hidden the stars  
From the sands of the Nile to the land of the Czars;  
Old Monmouth breaks in with its rattle and rain  
To the flash of the flint and "mad Anthony Wayne."

And Cromwell the trooper, half lamb and half lion,  
For the wicked King Charles and the blessed Mount  
Zion —  
Two hundred years nearer Time's morning than now,

Rode into the storm, naked blade and bare brow,  
Wheeled his surly old squadrons as the Lord wheels a  
a cloud —

Their hearts and their cannon all throbbing aloud —  
And rode down the king with a cavalry shock  
That smote off his crown, bent his head to the block,  
Made royalists tremble, and monarchy rock !

But the throb of no battery ever has stirred  
The world's mighty heart like some stout English word,  
Wherein a brave utterance, sandaled and shod,  
Has marched down the ages for Freedom and God !  
'Mid the splendor of June the roar of the Shannon  
Roused something more grand than the Chesapeake's  
cannon,  
For she wrung out the words from Lawrence's lip  
That shall linger forever : "Don't give up the ship!"  
Ah, the click of flint locks is not half so divine  
As the click of the type as they fall into line,  
The audible step of unfaltering feet  
To a mightier tune than our bosoms can beat.

I remember the heroes who sailed out of June,  
Ross, Harvey, and Franklin, and Hudson's "Half Moon,"  
Into realms where the sea has breathlessly stood,  
Like the scalps of the Alps dumb and white before God;  
Who have bended the oar, and have lifted the wing,  
Fairly fled the dominions of caliph and king,  
Broken out of horizons as old as mankind,  
Shatter'd shells of the worlds they were leaving behind.  
Aye, Harvey, who stood by the brink of a heart,  
And saw it brim over, turn crimson, and start,  
And discovered a river as truly God's own  
As the river of crystal that flows by His throne.

Bear away, ye tall ships, farewell, and all hail !  
Cloud up, main and mizzen, weigh anchor, and sail !  
Be lifted, blue Heaven ! Let the admirals through,  
There's a lubber ashore that is grander than you !  
Born of rags, and flung down on a marvelous street,  
All rough with the prints of a million of feet,  
And cradled in iron, and trampled with ink,  
This poor dingy creature, I venture to think,  
The frailest and feeblest of fluttering things,  
As easily crushed as a butterfly's wings,  
Has more power, oh, ye ships, than your canvas of white,  
To let out the world, and to let in the light,  
And swing from their hinges the portals of night.

Let the ashes of Smithfield tell, if they can,  
When this gift of the Pentecost fell upon man.  
It was born out of doors in that faded old June  
When the chime of Christ's ages struck twelve o'clock  
noon,  
And the barons of John plucked the heart of this thing.  
The Charter of Liberty, warm from the king.

Imperial June of the emerald crown !  
When angels had read the Lord's weather-roll down,  
They found but one June in all heaven to spare,  
And direct by the route of the answer to prayer  
From the glory above thou didst fall through the air.

## THE CALIFORNIA YEAR.

BEYOND the midland Rocky Range  
That wrinkles up the rugged world,  
Where gray volcanoes sat and smoked  
Like burgomasters weird and strange,  
And watched the columns as they curled —  
Where old Decembers, crowned and cloaked,  
Have seen a thousand Junes go by,  
A thousand winters leave the line  
Cast down upon the rocks to die,  
Until the granite crags grew white  
With icy bones and Arctic fight,  
And grave-clothes decked with pine;  
Where grim Sierra shows her teeth,  
Medusa East, Minerva West,  
A nursing Boreas at her breast,  
The chained and halted years beneath,  
She fronts two worlds with pale intent,  
And smiles across the continent.  
Beyond her, California lies  
At graceful length, with zone undone,  
Behold this Cleopatra's eyes  
Grow azure under western skies;  
Her smitten cheeks turned one by one,  
Like rare-ripe peaches to the sun,  
A June of Junes in either hand,  
Her early roses light the late  
To bed, and not a flower to grieve  
From Easter Morn to Christmas Eve —  
A tropic heart, a bosom fanned  
By breezes from the Golden Gate.

Then throned upon the unbound wheat,  
She slips her sandals, and her feet  
Walk white among the lilies, while  
We tramp the snow-drift's silent mile.  
Her months like graces stand in groups,  
To cull a flower November stoops,  
December's lips, with berries stained,  
Are pressed upon the cheek of June,  
October's hand is violet-veined,  
And morning-glories last till noon.  
The year's four seasons tossed and strown,  
Like Sybil's leaves along the track  
Of Time—the dear old reckoning gone,  
For May meets August coming back,  
And tender blades and yellow sheaves  
In one rich landscape strangely met,  
A wild Arabian-night vignette,  
And winter woods wear flowing sleeves,  
And bud and bloom and harvest all  
Commingle in a carnival.

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## THANKSGIVING.

## I.

LAY out the earth in a sheet of snow,  
There is nothing at all to harm below,  
Where men dream out the world together,  
And pansies sleep till pleasant weather—  
The safest place in all the land  
Is the narrow realm of the folded hand!  
Then thanks to God that a flower will die—  
'Twas made to time Thanksgiving by:

Breathe as it falls — prophetic thing! —  
“There’ll be an April in the spring!”  
Then thanks to God for a sister there  
To stand on Glory’s diamond stair,  
And thanks again, though I go late,  
A mother gone shall smiling wait,  
Shall breathe three names with reverent tone,  
The Child’s, the Virgin’s, and her Own,  
And lift the latch of Mercy’s gate!

## II.

Rouse up the fire to a costly glow,  
Till the maple parts, and the rubies show.  
Swing back the curtains now if ever,  
And, rich and warm, the slender river  
Shall cleave Thanksgiving Night in twain,  
As the mantle parted the old Red Main!  
Ah, never fear — shine as it will,  
Enough is left to cheer us still.  
Perhaps some wanderer going past,  
Who tried all sorrows but the last,  
And wonders why he dares to live,  
And thinks he has no thanks to give,  
May see that glimmer on the ground —  
His old dead heart give glad rebound —  
It looks so like the road of gold  
He trod himself in time of old —  
Look up and see Thanksgiving found!

## III.

Bring out the chairs from the empty wall,  
Where fitful shadows used to fall,  
The shapes of father, sister, mother,  
Of slender sweetheart, friend, and brother.

No painted window half so fair  
As the old home-room with its shadows there;  
No pictured hall, at king's desire,  
Could match that group before the fire,  
Who never cast a shade beside,  
But on that wall, and when they died!  
And some went up at break of day,  
Some waited longer by the way;  
Let them who will thank God for light,  
Such shadows never made it night.

Come one, come all, there yet is room,  
Thanks be to God, from heaven to home  
Is nothing but a flash of flight!

## IV.

Wheel forth the table, a laden palm,  
We'll all give thanks, and we'll sing a psalm —  
Some song old-fashioned, of Forever,  
That floated safe across the river,  
No note lost out, no cadence gone,  
They warbled, died, and sang right on!  
The girls shall come in their white and blue,  
As if they broke God's azure through,  
Played truant to the realms of light  
To be with us Thanksgiving night.  
The boys are thronging through the hall,  
They've not grown old these years at all!  
Some marched away to muffled drum,  
But fling no shadows as they come —  
Without a sorrow or a sin  
E'en Death himself would let them in —  
Oh, Sweethearts! Comrades! Welcome home!

## THE CHILD AND THE STAR.

O H, feel in your bosom, my darling,  
If the flutter is there as of old,  
The pant of Sterne's captive, the starling,  
When this old-fashioned story is told.  
Oh, the days sparkling up to the rim  
That bounds the one world by the other !  
Oh, your heart even full to the brim  
With love like the love of your mother !  
When you knew nothing more about sorrow or sin  
Than the buttercups knew that she held to your chin,  
While she watched with a smile your small secret un-  
fold,  
As it tinted the white with a glimmer of gold.

We stood in the pasture together  
With the clover breath over our heads,  
Right down from the Lord came the weather,  
Right up went the larks from their beds;  
And we longed for a goldfinch's billow  
As it rode the invisible flood —  
An oriole swung from a willow,  
And the daisies were bowing to God.  
But the year was a harp, and like David, the king's,  
And the graver the cadence the longer the strings —  
One by one went the days, growing briefer and fewer,  
And we told them all off, and no tale could be truer —  
So we watched out the time with no thought of a sigh,  
For our hearts danced and sang, " Merry Christmas is  
nigh ! "

Oh, honey-bee, gypsy of summer,  
There's a flower that is sweeter than thine !

For thee there's an angel for comer,  
With the sweep of a pinion divine.  
Oh, day on the hem of December!  
And oh, star of old Bethlehem's brood!  
Shine down in my heart like an ember  
With a glow from the altar of Goá.  
Oh, fairest of flowers in the garden  
That dost blossom the brightest and last,  
When our Eden has furloughed its warden,  
And the roses and lilies are past;  
When Euroclydon's fingers so sculpture the snow,  
That you hardly can tell if the sleeper below  
Is just waiting for spring, or the trumpet to blow;  
When the marble in motion and the Parian blend,  
Till the sexton must say where "God's acre" should  
end,  
And 'mid these from the quarry and those from the  
cloud,  
Must declare which they are that are wearing a shroud!

Sit here by my side like a lover,  
Let us turn down the flare of the lamp,  
And talk the dear story all over  
Till around us the shadows encamp.  
As we did in the days of the olden,  
We will light a dim candle again,  
For the blaze of a chandelier golden  
Never shone from the Now to the Then.  
We will blow a dull coal to its glowing,  
As we blew it long ages ago,  
While the Lord of the harvest is sowing  
With His tempest out there in the snow.

Do you see that gray roof strangely drifted with leaves,  
And the moss all along on its low northern eaves ?  
'Tis as if Robin Redbreast, on duty again,  
Would have covered my dead from the vision of men.  
Each side of the gate a bold Lombardy stands,  
As stately as warders, as graceful as wands,  
That I watched long ago, while they swept the blue sky  
All clear of the clouds that were loitering by !  
I, there in my cradle slowly rocking and dreaming,  
They, clearing the road where the angels were gleaming.  
Now I pause on the threshold the loving feet trod  
That have walked upon thorns, that have gone up to  
God —

All traced here and there on threshold or stair  
But the one pair that left not a print anywhere—  
Ah, the little bare feet that had never been shod !

Oh, heart of the house, my dead mother,  
Give your boy the old greeting once more  
That I never have heard from another  
Since death was let in at the door.  
I can reach up my hand to the ceiling  
Of the rooms once the world's greater part —  
Who wonders I cannot help feeling  
They have narrowed to fit to my heart ?

Ah, these little green panes let the morning in late  
But it never was stained by the emerald gate —  
And the clock has run down in its desolate place —  
How we counted it in with its moon of a face,  
When we said: "Four were born, but the clock is alive,"  
And the household forever was numbered at five.  
And dumb is the bell that did toll off the hours

And the boys and the blessings, the birds and the flowers,  
And dead are the hands that were lifted a space  
When the noon seemed to halt while the father said grace !  
Here's the place on the jamb where we "reckoned " at night,  
There's a mark on the wall where we measured our height,  
And a line on the sill where the sunbeam swung round  
Like a ship on a bar, as 'twas nearing the ground.  
Ah, how slowly it crept when some day was to-morrow !  
Ah, how swiftly it went I have learned to my sorrow !  
Oh, if Gibeon's sun could have shone there of old,  
And burnished the sill with unperishing gold !

The air is alive with a shiver —  
There's a wandering chill in the room —  
There's a foot that has forded the river —  
There's a hand feels for mine from a tomb !  
I take it in silence, unshrinking,  
And I warm it again in my grasp,  
There is nothing of sadness in thinking  
Two worlds may have met in the clasp.  
My heart strangely longs as I linger,  
To be decked with some darling old word,  
Be clasped as a ring clasps a finger  
By a trinket my boyhood had heard —  
Some fragment of speech by love broken,  
As the emblem was broken by Christ,  
That, passed round the homestead in token  
Would a soul from a sod have enticed !

Ah, the chimney draws still ! It is drawing my heart,  
And that rudest of things ever fashioned by art  
Does so kindle my soul with intensest desire  
To become as a child and see faces in fire,  
That I never can wonder the curling blue smoke,  
As dull water was wine when Divinity spoke,  
Always turned into crimson the instant it broke  
Like a glory unrolled into sunshine and air,  
And then floated abroad like an archangel's hair !  
For that chimney was ever the top of the stair  
Where *my* angel came down in the dear Christmas eve;  
Oh, set back the old clock and still let me believe  
That the saint of my childhood, Saint Nicholas, came  
Down that tunnel of glory, the route of the flame!  
Here the stockings were swung in their red, white, and  
blue,  
All fashioned to feet that were light as the dew,  
For they walked upon flowers without crushing a bud,  
That have trampled the flint till it blushes with blood.  
Ah, the fragrant old faith when we watched the cold  
gray  
Reluctantly line the dim border of day,  
When we braved the bare floor with our little bare  
feet —  
No shrine to a pilgrim was ever so sweet.  
When each heart and each stocking was burdened with  
bliss —  
On the verge of two worlds there is nothing like this  
But a mother's last smile and a lover's first kiss !  
“Merry Christmas,” we cried, and in answer to prayer,  
The glad greeting came back like a gush of June air,  
That had lurked out the night in those bosoms of theirs

To waylay us at dawn when we stole down the stairs.  
God pity the man who has naught to remember,  
With no heart anywhere if not in December,  
Who abandons the Cross because Romans adore it,  
And yet longs for the crown that is carried before it;  
Who declaring the birthday of Christ is uncertain,  
Would let down on the Manger Oblivion's curtain—  
Unheeding the birth of the Heir to the Throne,  
While he tells off the years, and then honors his own !  
Shuts the door on the angels commissioned by Heaven  
To belong to the children for one blessed even,  
Locks out of their hearts the invisible land,  
And tarnishes time with the touch of his hand.  
Where the birds had the freedom of window and eaves,  
And the walls were all garnished with Bethlehem's  
sheaves,  
The bright straw with its amber bestrewing the floor,  
The great eyes of the oxen like lamps at the door,  
And their breath clouding up the dim air of the place  
As if censers were swinging round altars of grace,  
Was the Prince of all worlds in humility born,  
Who created the Christmas and crowned the new morn.

There were angels without but a flash from the throne,  
With the flow of their robes as two mornings in one,  
For those angels without brought their glory along,  
And they sang to the planet its first Christmas Song.  
The Star in the East took its place in the choir,  
While the Seraph sang alto the Angels sang air,  
And they said: "Unto God all the glory be given!"  
Ere it ended on earth it had mounted to Heaven—  
And they said, and the cadence is lingering still,  
"Be His peace evermore to the men of good will ! "

There were Shepherds hard by when the carol arose,  
And they came as they were, in their every-day clothes ;  
All above in the blue lay the Lord's shining sheep,  
And below in the green were their own fast asleep ;  
And their hearts of themselves just beginning to sing  
What had fluttered to earth like a lark with one wing,  
But the anthem's grand surge swept it up to the King !  
And that first Christmas Party stood out in the moon  
As they watched the transfigured and glorified tune.

And the Magi were seeking the Christmas that day,  
And the Star went before them and blazoned the way —  
Ah, the children and Christmas together belong,  
As the melody marries the words of a song  
That can float us right up where the seraphim throng.  
With their hands in a tremble the Magi unfold  
All their treasures of myrrh and their tokens of gold,  
And they swept the brown manger with beards like the  
drift,  
As the cloud turns to snow with the moon in the rift,  
And they led off the world with their first Christmas  
Gift.

And the Star and the Manger, the Carol and Child  
Have been gladdening the planet since Bethlehem  
smiled.  
Bid the singers begin, and the manger's old chorus  
We will sing as *they* sang through the ages before us .

Oh, lift your dull heart from its pillow,  
Let me hold it awhile in my hand,  
Till it warms at the sight of the willow  
As the sailor at sight of the land ;  
Till it rallies some soul from its sorrow,

Till it smiles the dark winter away,  
Lights the hope of a better to-morrow  
With the glow of a brighter to-day.  
Let us bid for a cloud to be lifted,  
For a bed that is nothing but straw,  
For a hearth that is ashen and drifted,  
For a debtor disastered by law;  
That the tables of stone may be broken  
And the hearth be an altar of gold,  
And the pillow of Bethel betoken  
Not a couch but the Dreamer's of old !  
What song was born out of the grieving,  
What a faith in its splendor began,  
What worship of God by believing  
In the angel that lingers in man :

Oh, awake in your chambers, ye bells everywhere,  
Overturn, oh, ye goblets, and empty in air  
All the music that swells to your resonant brims,  
Till ye throb like our hearts, and it blends with our  
hymns !

Now be thanks to our God that this Eve of the Christmas,  
Uniting two worlds with its radiant Isthmus,  
And joining again what transgression had riven,  
Is the children's own road to the Kingdom of Heaven !  
Oh, bells that are iron ! Oh, hearts that are human !  
Oh, songs that are sweet as the loving of woman !  
Be ye blent all the while in a chorus sublime  
As the carol of stars by the cradle of Time !  
And oh, spare us an angel from Bethlehem's choir,  
Let him bring the same song that he helped to sing there,  
Be the grand old beatitude sounded again,  
And to earth everywhere, Merry Christmas, AMEN !

## EASTER.

TO MRS. MARY S. BRADFORD.

LIKE flocks of sheep celestial the folded clouds were  
still—  
The sky fell blue and delicate on headland, lake, and  
hill—  
The sun was strong in burnish'd mail of the beaten  
gold of God,  
And childish daisies rose and rent the winding sheet  
of sod;  
And April's breath was redolent of something sweet  
and rare  
She lightly kissed in coming, that had left its fragrance  
there.  
Perhaps it was a violet, an apple bough in bloom,  
Perhaps it was arbutus, with its whisper of perfume,  
It might have been a hyacinth, a pilgrim at a tomb.  
So Easter offerings on the earth as on an altar lay,  
Sweet hints of double morning that should dawn on  
Easter day;  
As if one great beatitude fell down and bless'd the  
ground,  
As if a song exultant rose, like light, without a sound.  
Then, with a parcel in her hand a smiling woman came;  
It might have been a bridal robe, perhaps an oriflamme;  
And it was both, full well I knew, wrought for a holy  
place,  
A chancel would be radiant, an altar it would grace.  
Fold after fold the fabric fair unrolling to the light,  
It kindled up my little room, Aurora in the night!  
With silken sheen of banner and broidery of gold,

The drapings of the altar and the chancel were unrolled.  
There were wreaths of golden roses, a golden cross and  
crown,—  
There were filmy ferns, and borders like a royal wed-  
ding gown,—  
Golden words of adoration, golden guise for golden  
thought,  
By that loving woman's fingers all delicately wrought;  
And she stitched her heart within them as her shining  
needle true  
Its little trail of golden thread in graceful beauty drew,  
Across that field of spotless white the sunny tracings  
went,  
And calla lilies to the Lord each golden chalice lent,  
And near them basked a butterfly as golden as the  
rest,—  
All pure and fair, they might have been a holy angel's  
vest;  
So pure, so fair, they would befit Old Herbert's Sabbath  
day.  
Despite December's drifted gloom these precious flow-  
ers will stay.  
Well done, dear Dorcas of to-day, this graceful work of  
thine  
Is nothing less than worship in budding flower and vine !

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## OLD-FASHIONED SPRING.

GIVE me the sweet old-fashioned Spring,  
Dear as a girl's engagement ring —

I hear the keys in crystal locks  
Slow turn to let the rivers run  
And shine like lizards in the sun.  
I watch the rigid world come to,  
The skies come off with broods of blue,  
The soft clouds troop in fleecy flocks,  
The mosses green the umber rocks,  
The twin leaves lift their tips of ears,  
The rushes poise their slender spears,  
The squirrels tick like crazy clocks,  
The sunshine leave the Southern hall  
And swing around to the Northern wall.

I watch the blue smokes slowly rise  
Amid the maples' reddening skies —  
The hemlock couch, the rafter rails,  
The neck-yoked Libras with their pails,  
The bended twig, a ghostly spoon,  
That films across like a cloudy moon;  
The white eggs dance in the tumbling sap,  
The nut-cakes heap a checkered lap,  
The young moon's sickle reaps the stars,  
Her light ribbed off with maple bars;  
The laugh of girls, the camp-fire glow,  
The great black cauldron, bubbling slow,  
The amber mouth-piece on the snow —  
Oh, memories of the maple fane,  
Wax sweet for aye though moons shall wane !

I tread brown earth with loving foot,  
Its breath steals up with Agur's prayer.  
I see the lily's green surtout  
Unbutton to the light and air.  
I hear the hymn-book songs begin  
To fly abroad from windows wide  
With notes of lilac-breath thrown in,  
And rhyme and thyme in mingled tide.  
I hear the bees' small hum-book's drone  
From garden bed to clover glade,  
And frogs strike up with deep trombone,  
And lilting bells and tambourine  
The old Homeric serenade.

Give me the dear long-coming spring,  
Horizons like a blue-bird's wing;  
I love its sights and sounds and scents,  
The plowshare's fragrant corduroy,  
The greenwood's rustling halls of joy,  
Down to the toad-stools' tiny tents.  
The fire-fly brings his lantern light  
To show the summer's velvet night;  
The beds of pinks are bright with thrums,  
And golden glow chrysanthemums;  
Verbenas burn, geraniums blaze,  
The smoke-tree clouds with purple mist,  
The fuchsia wears an amethyst —  
A ruby at the hum-bird's throat  
And silver in the finch's note  
And satin on the martin's coat,  
And fire upon the red-bird's wing,  
God speed the Noon ! The Sun is king.

## A BIRTH-DAY.

DECEMBER 17TH, 1807.

I.

NEW ENGLAND bred, December born,  
Oh, eldest son of Doric song,  
We bid thy fame and thee good morn !  
The welcomes of the world belong  
To thee. Thanksgiving Day drifts down  
To set thy birth-right in its crown.

II.

Thanks for thy bugle-horn that played  
Oppression's Dead March round the land,  
Thanks for thy ringing harp that made  
New pulses leap in labor's hand,  
Thanks for thy trumpet's Gabriel blast  
That rallied out the right at last.

III.

Thanks for thy psaltery's iron strings  
That shook their rhythmic thunders out  
As eagles spurn with clashing wings  
The mountain eyrie's rock redoubt,  
Until God's broad horizons ran  
The circling brotherhood of man !

IV.

Thanks for thy golden bees that hum  
The fragrant tunes of summer through  
The year ; forever go and come  
With all things sweet and pure and true,  
And lend these dull and daily lives  
The music of the murmuring hives.

## V.

Midway between Thanksgiving Day  
And Christmas Eve a cradle rocked,  
An angel left his radiant way  
And stood beside the door and knocked.  
Before him waved the Christmas glow,  
Behind him whirled the drifting snow.

## VI.

The door swung wide. Beyond his feet  
The yule-log streamed a golden light,  
As if a small celestial street  
Were ribbon'd on the breast of night.  
Let grace and mercy here abide  
From Halloween to Christmas-tide !

## VII.

“Now peace on earth,” the angel said,  
“Praise God the Father and the Son,”  
And so above that infant head  
The carol and the psalm begun,  
Translated since in every tongue,  
By Battle thundered, Mercy sung.

## VIII.

The Christmas coal that touched his lips,  
The Christmas soul that warmed his breast,  
Unquenched to-day in earth's eclipse  
Is yet aglow; is still a guest,—  
In roll of timbrel, song of wren,  
‘Tis “peace on earth, good will to men !”

## IX.

He sang. The debtor's dungeon door  
Swung backward on its hinge of rust,

The chains clanked down that bondmen wore  
And blood cried out from speechless dust,  
Till skies of daisies starred the sod  
Where terror knelt and tyrant trod.

## X.

He sang. And poor Bron rhuddyn's throat  
Was trembling sweet with English song.  
He sang. And bolted lightnings smote  
The grizzly battlements of Wrong.  
Strike not thy "Tent" beside the sea,  
Brave Laureate of Liberty!

## XI.

Not "Snow-bound" yet, this later John  
Sings Eden's dear old songs again,  
And Whittier's Pilgrims travel on  
Till Time's last anthem sounds Amen.

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## OUR SILVER WEDDING DAY.

1852-1877.

**I**N Geyser Cañon, California, there is an alcove called "The Lovers' Rest," a sort of shrine under a roof of laurel. It hangs like a balcony above the Pluton River. Vines drape the trees, and wild flowers smile from rugged clefts and swing above the water.

It was just here that an anniversary found us that had been twenty-five years on the way. Kind fellow-mountaineers made it memorable with cordial words and pleasant deeds, and under the laurel shadow, the voice of mountain birds and Geyser River clear and strong, the air bright and sweet with sun and flowers, the Seventh of June straight down from Heaven, the wedding feast set forth, the friends around, these lines, written where the miner's

wash-bowl used to be, "on my knee," were read, and then, "The Lovers' Rest," left to its loveliness and loneliness, the wedding guests were scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific. "Here's a health to them that's awa'!"

#### OUR SILVER WEDDING DAY.

FIVE and twenty years ago  
And two thousand miles away,  
With a mingled gleam and glow  
As of roses in the snow,  
Shines day.

Only day that never set  
In all this world of sorrow,—  
Only day that ever let  
Weary, wayside hearts forget  
To-morrow.

All the world was wondrous fair  
To the bridegroom and the bride,  
With the lilacs in the air  
And the roses all at prayer  
Side by side.

In the door stood golden day,  
Washed the noon-mark out with light,  
Larks half sang their souls away—  
Who dreamed the morning would not stay  
Until night?

Dim and bright and far and near  
Is the homestead where we met—  
Friends around no longer here,  
Rainbow light in every tear—  
Together yet!

Ah, the graves since we were wed  
That have made that June day dim—  
Golden crown and silver head  
Always dying, never dead,  
Like some hymn—

Some sweet breath of olden days:  
Lips are dust — on goes the song !  
Soft in plaint and grand in praise,  
Living brooks by dusty ways  
All along !

Wandered wide the loving feet,  
Some have made the lilies grow,  
And have walked the golden street  
Where the missing mornings meet  
From below.

Night the weaver waits to weave,  
Facing north I see unfurled  
Shadows on my Eastern sleeve—  
Crape of night, but never grieve  
For the world.

Now, dear heart, thy hand in mine,  
Through clear and cloudy weather,  
Crowned with blessings half divine  
We'll drink the cup of life's old wine  
Together

In this "Lovers'" perfect "Rest,"  
Beside the Geyser River,  
Where mountains heap the burning breast  
Of giants with the plumpy crest  
Forever.

New friends grace this Silver Day,  
    Apples gold in pictures fair,  
Bringing back a royal ray  
From the everlasting May  
    Over there.

We lift the prayer of tiny Tim,  
    “God bless us every one !”  
Crown life's goblet to the brim,  
While across its Western rim  
    Shines the sun.

#### JULY FOURTH, 1886.

LAST-BORN of Babel men,  
    A century and ten  
        To-day !  
Roar, heavy guns,  
By loud-tongued batteries thunder salutation,  
    Ring off the rust  
Of cob-webbed slumber reddening brazen lips,  
    And say :  
God save the birth-day of this stately Nation,  
    God keep her aye from battle-cloud eclipse,  
        From might-made right,  
From grasping greed, from cruel pride of station.  
    *Dieu et mon droit*  
Shall be our legend with a free translation,  
    God and the Right,  
All rights in one harmoniously entwining  
    As shines the sun,  
Its tinted rays in noon's broad beam combining —  
    God speed the day !

Bid all our clouds unfold "the silver lining,"  
 For this we pray;  
 Bid all day long our banner'd stars be shining.

Ah, fairer far  
 The Golden Rule's soft light than sabres gleaming,  
 Or Arctic hosts with fairy falchions streaming,  
 And spear and star.  
 And then,  
 Though feasts might dwindle to a soldier's ration,  
 Who saved the Nation free on fare no better,  
 Wrought out for time the Continent's salvation,  
 Left land and hand no confine and no fetter  
 Save seas that border and save love that binds,  
 Good-will grown cardinal, borne by all the winds,  
 We crave no land beside, whatever may betide  
 The great Republic—God ever bless and guide,  
 AMEN !

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## BURNS' CENTURY SONG.

## I.

H OPE, her starry vigil keeping  
 O'er a Campbell by the Clyde—  
 By the Tweed a "Wizard" sleeping—  
 "Shepherd" by the Yarrow's side—  
 Land of glory, song, and story,  
 Land of mountains and of men,  
 Did ye dream that Song could die?  
 Banks and braes be glad again,  
 Robert Burns is passing by!

Everywhere, everywhere,  
 Smiles will break and tears will start,  
 Making rainbows round the heart,  
 Plowman, Brother, Bard of Ayr !

## II.

Heart of leal ! Can this be dying,  
 Coming thus sublimely down ?  
 Lo, an hundred winters sighing  
 Leave unstrown thy holly crown !  
 Not in sorrow dawns thy morrow,  
 " Bonny Jean " is by thy side,  
 Making life and love keep time;  
 Beauty be thy deathless bride,  
 Weaving all our hearts in rhyme !

## III.

Heavy heart and smoky rafter  
 Growing light with Burns's song --  
 Calmer tears and clearer laughter --  
 Plaided bosoms brave and strong;  
 Birds are singing, blue-bells ringing,  
 Naked Heart in open palm !  
 With thy " days of auld lang syne,"  
 With thy Cotter's evening psalm,  
 Thou hast made all ages thine.

## IV.

Now the thrush's silver sonnet  
 Trembling from the blossom'd thorn,  
 Winter floating white upon it --  
 Sweetest Lyric ever born !  
 Bruce is breaking — Wallace waking,  
 From the clasp of mighty Death,

Morven swells the Doric song !—  
 Lads' and lassies' blended breath  
 Gushes sweet all summer long !

## v.

O'er the daisy in the furrow  
 Bending low with loving words —  
 By the mouse's broken burrow —  
 Songs of burnies and of birds —  
 Breezes blowing — rivers flowing —  
 Hark, the beat of bonny Doon,  
 Logan, Devon, Afton, Ayr,  
 Braided in a pleasant tune,  
 "Highland Mary" in the choir !

Everywhere, everywhere,  
 Smiles will break and tears will start,  
 Making rainbows round the heart,  
 Plowman, Brother, Bard of Ayr !

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## DECORATION DAY.

**O**H, be dumb all ye clouds  
 As the dead in their shrouds,  
 Let your pulses of thunder die softly away,  
 Ye have nothing to do  
 But to drift round the blue,  
 For the emerald world grants a furlough to-day !

Bud, blossom, and flower  
 All blended in shower,  
 In the grandest and gentlest of rains shall be shed  
 On the acres of God

With their billows of sod  
Breaking breathless and beautiful over the dead !

They do flush the broad land  
With the flower-laden hand,  
Drift the dimples of graves with the colors of even;  
Where a BOY IN BLUE dreams  
A "Forget-me-not" gleams —  
No rain half so sweet ever fell out of heaven !

From no angel was caught  
The magnificent thought  
To pluck daisies and roses, those *bravest* of things,—  
For they stand all the while  
In their graves with a smile,—  
And to strew with live fragrance dead lions and kings !

It was somebody born,  
It was Rachel forlorn,  
'Twas the love they named Mary, the trust they called  
Ruth;  
'Twas a woman who told  
That the blossoms unfold  
A defiance to death and a challenge for truth;  
That the violet's eye,  
Though it sleep, by and by  
Shall watch out the long age in the splendor of youth.

Ah, she hallowed the hour  
When she gathered the flower;  
When she said, "This shall emblem the fame of my  
brave!"  
When she thought, "This shall borrow  
"Brighter azure to-morrow";  
When she laid it to-day on the crest of a grave !

## INDIAN SUMMER.

THEN past the yellow regiments of corn  
There came an Indian Maiden, autumn-born,  
And June returned and held her by the hand,  
And led Time's smiling Ruth through all the land;  
A veil of golden air was o'er her flung,  
The south wind whispered and the robins sung.

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## APRIL.

I SEE the pickets of the Spring come glimmering into line,  
I know them by their uniforms, I see their colors shine,  
The azure flash of birds in blue, the robins in their red,  
And fleets of pearl and purple at anchor overhead.  
The plumed vedettes begin to play, the pasture brooks  
to sing,  
The April gate is open and resurrection king.  
The World is glad to be alive, the Easter door ajar,  
All Christendom is Bethlehem and lighted by the Star—  
And lighted by the Star that gave a birth-day to the race  
And showed a Grave dismantled and a Glory in its  
place,  
And wrought amid the gloom a miracle instead  
That added to the calendar the Birth-day of the Dead !  
The World comes smiling to the door with pansies in  
its hand,  
Remembering all the times before that Spring has blest  
the land.  
The muffled streets grow musical, the shrouded paths  
are bare,  
The children haunt the pavements, their cadences the  
air.

## SEPTEMBER.

A GAIN the harvests white and gold  
Have rustled round the glowing land,  
The meadow swaths like billows rolled,  
Till sheaves of grain in wigwams stand  
Where Plenty pitched her tawny camps;  
The hickories light their yellow lamps,  
The nights are growing bold;  
The morning-glories lose their light,  
The birds are clouding up for flight,  
The daisies growing old.  
The katydids' all-night dispute  
Proclaims the end is near —  
The rafter peaks again are mute,  
The barn's sky parlor like a flute  
Without a breath of cheer —  
The bobolink has ceased to swing  
Upon the reedy spear,  
His marriage bells have lost their ring,  
The roses' leaves have drifted down,  
The lilies all are dying —  
The stricken fields are turning brown,  
The sunflower pales his golden crown,  
The wingèd seeds are flying —  
The gorgeous forests by-and-by  
Will kindle like a sunset sky,  
A heaven there and here !  
The pageant of the grand campaign  
Will dim in autumn's latter rain,  
And ferns upon the window-pane  
Will deck the dying year.

## POEMS OF FLOWERS AND BIRDS.

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### FLOWERS.

FLOWERS bloom in Christ's Sermon, and all the year  
long  
You can gather a Sharon from Solomon's Song.

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### THE SKYLARK.

I HELD in my hand a wonder—a hymn of a thousand years,  
It was born in an English meadow—it was older than English cheers—  
'Twas a hymn for the Roman eagles and a psalm for the Norman Line—  
It was sung through the wars of the Roses, when the York turned red as wine—  
It was heard on Bosworth field, when Gloster's flint struck fire,  
And Richard's soul to Richmond's steel did glimmer and expire;  
When the pæans for the thane drowned the dirges for the thing,  
And he swept across the planet on fame's eternal wing,  
Who waged the battle as an earl but won it as a king,  
And plucked the crown of England from the hawthorn where it hung,

And lightly to his longing brow Golconda's cluster  
swung,  
The crown upon the coronet, till the light of its pearls  
grew thin  
And pale as a morning star that has led the daylight in.  
Charge ! and Marston Moor was a drum by galloping  
cavalry beat,  
Halt ! and each iron rank brought up with a clank, and  
each trooper sat still in his seat,  
Hark ! and down from the blue to the red was floating  
that exquisite strain,  
As if every rider had ridden, and never drawn sabre or  
rein,  
Right out of the hell of the battle to the door of hea-  
ven ajar,  
And thought he heard before his time the singing of a  
star,  
And thought he saw in the downy cloud the truant from  
the choir,  
As it hung in sweet libration — an anthem in the air.  
And I held in my hand that wonder — a book with a  
single psalm,  
That would not brim the hollow of a woman's loving  
palm;  
And the lyric was brown-breasted, and the lids of the  
book were wings,  
And the bird was an English skylark, and the feeblest  
of God's things,  
That had fallen out of the azure like a mote from a  
mighty eye,  
And had shared the fate of the sparrow, for the Father  
saw him die.

Oh, bravest bird of Britain! — a little ounce of death —  
Oh, song born out of heaven! — a clod without a breath.

And then my soul grew reverent — my heart beat strong  
and grand,

As I thought of the broad commission of the atom in  
my hand;

That the Admiral of the fleets at anchor off the world,  
Flung out his pennant with a touch that little pinion  
furled —

Unrolled the scrolls of thunder, 'twixt the seraph and  
the sod,

Dashed down a word of fire in the running hand of God,  
And stamped the stormy margins with His ring so  
broad and brave,

One half is in the welkin — the other in the wave;

By him to meet that bird mid-air, the misty morn was  
driven,

Lest it should break away from earth and sing itself to  
heaven;

He sowed the Grand Armada like grain upon the breeze,  
But gave to lark and lightning the freedom of the seas!

---

The cattle asleep in the meadow and the shadows asleep  
on the hill,

And the mists, like gray Franciscans, all standing  
ghostly still —

And the stars are drowsily shutting their eyes as weary  
watchers will —

And the crescent moon in the West shows the flash of a  
silver shoe,

As the steed that brought over the midnight is bearing  
it down the blue,

And out of the silence and shadow there quivered the  
slenderest song,  
And a bird going up in the morning exultantly followed  
along —  
And the mountains stood down in their places and the  
clouds all timidly clung,  
But a strand of Jehovah untwisted whereon the lost  
Pleiads are strung,  
When this bird with its music and motion, ere the dawn  
had blooded its breast,  
Up direct from the sod to the glory of God, trium-  
phant burst from the nest.

---

#### THE ROCHESTER ROBIN.

A ROCHESTER robin alighted one day  
On a bar or a brace of the wonderful thing  
That mills the swift miles like grain in its way,  
And flies like a bird, though it never takes wing.  
  
And the Rochester robin said to herself,  
“ What a place for a nest, so strong and so warm,  
As neat as a pin and as shiny as delf,  
Up out of the danger, in out of the storm.”  
  
And her mate by the roadside struck up the old lay  
He sang for the apple-tree blossoms to dance,  
The girlish white blossoms in pink appliqué  
More fragrant and fair than the lilies of France.  
  
The heart of the engine was cold as a cave,  
The furnace door grim as the grate of a cell,  
And dumb as the church under Switzerland's wave,  
Like a tulip of gold the glittering bell.

Then the stoker swung wide the furnace's door,  
Stirred up the dull fire, and the robins just said,  
"Summer weather to-day!" Then rumble and roar  
Played the water's hot pulse in white clouds overhead.

"I'm sure it will rain," he sang to his mate,  
"It thunders and lightens, but work right along,  
The house but half done and the season so late —  
How cloudy it grows!" So he kept up the song.

And the twain fell to work, bore timbers of straw,  
And fibres of wood caught on thistle and thorn,  
And wrought them all in by the Lord's "higher law,"  
With threads of the laces some maiden had worn.

Then clang swung the bell and the warble was hushed,  
And the crazy sparks flew as if the storm tore  
The small constellations aside and asunder,  
While the engine along the steel parallels rushed.  
The birds watched it all with innocent wonder —  
"Who ever saw stars in the day time before?"

Then she cried, and he said: "The gale is so strong  
I think the whole world must be blowing away!"  
She, trusting, replied: "Cannot last very long,"  
And kept on her work far sweeter than play.

To and fro, far and near, their fiery world went,  
The cup of their loves brimming over with life,  
And the engineer stood at his window intent  
And watched the steel rails, the red-breast, and wife,  
And declared by his engine and honor he would  
Be the death of the man, big or little, who should

In the height or the depth of his gracelessness dare  
"To meddle or make" with his passengers there.

Ah, brave guests of the foot-board, ticketed through  
All weathers and times till the end of the run,  
The Lord of the sparrows who is caring for you  
And the Lord of all realms forever are One.

---

#### THISTLE SERMON.

PRAY let the gaudy tulip go  
For Scotland's flower with crimson crest,  
That wears a bee on every blow  
And bristles like a bandit dressed;  
That drifts its silver life-balloon  
Along the year's dull afternoon  
Bound for another Spring, and girds  
The feeble heart like holy words.

Just as the seeds are fit to fly  
A yellow-bird drops deftly down,  
A living nugget from the sky,  
And lights upon the thistle brown.  
And then, as if the golden-head  
Were shaking up its feather bed,  
A little breathless tempest breaks  
About the bird in silver flakes,  
A cunning cloud of flock and fleck—  
Alas, the thistle is a wreck!  
But no, the seeds are taking wing,  
The goldfinch has no time to sing  
For taking toll, and then the gale

Sweeps out the fleet of silk and sail,  
And so, the weeds are always here,  
And finches dine another year,  
And so, O troubled Soul, good cheer!

---

## TWO BIRDS OF JUNE.

THE colors of Lord Baltimore were precisely those of the Oriole, and Linnaeus gave to it the name of the founder of the city whose trees and parks the bird makes beautiful with plumage and song.

---

AH me, ah me, how neighborly the precious Junes become,  
When life's brave marching tunes give way to the toll  
of the dreary drum,  
And the bugles hold their breath, and the clarionets  
are dumb.  
Have they left Time's great procession, to loiter by the  
way,  
That they cluster in my thought like a wedding morn  
bouquet,  
That their fragrance brings the breath of voices never  
heard,  
That I see their vanished faces when the leafy veils are  
stirred,  
That the measure of their foot-falls makes music at my  
door,  
Though the weary feet have halted since June was here  
before?  
Why should I strike the minor mode, with earth all new  
and fair,  
As if the morning hymn of Stars yet trembled on the air,

And yet my heart is haunted with gray shadows of regret,  
For the song that breaks no silence, the sky whose sun  
has set.

Imperial June has come again, the diadem of Time,  
Her breath is fragrant music, and her rivers run in  
rhyme;

The land one mighty emerald, God's kohinoor the sun,  
As if the universe deployed its wheeling worlds in one;  
The leafy pomp and stateliness of forests in array,  
Down to the daisy groups that dance beneath the eye  
of Day;

All the lakes besprent with lilies where the scented  
zephyr faints,

So many crystal tables with a service fit for saints;  
The clouds are bound about the brow with circlets of  
the seven,

Whence bridal veils depending, of the gentlest rains of  
Heaven,

Proclaim the wedding of two worlds, not Orient and  
the West,

But the Planet in the green and the Azure of the Blest.  
The days grow long, as if some world far mightier than  
this

Let fall its day-time mantle down the ether's blue abyss  
Upon our human homestead in radiant folds of light,  
Till their twilight-tinted borders overlap the narrow  
night.

A token from a perished June adorns my sunset room,  
Unsightly to another's eyes, to mine a brilliant bloom.  
'Tis just a branch of mountain ash, a slender, worthless  
thing,

Some withered rubies grace it still, some faded leaflets  
cling.

I saw it in its braver time, a pendulum that swung  
When winnowed by a blue jay's wing or passing breezes  
sung.

There came one day two liveried birds, in black and  
orange bright,

They wore baronial colors of a noble belted knight,  
The golden robins of the girls, the hang-birds of the  
boys,

The fire-birds, little flashing flakes of the living fire of  
joys.

Now hark to his brilliant tenor, and hark to her dainty  
flute,

It is the minnesinger's song, be other minstrels mute:

"The thrush is our rustic cousin and dresses *tra-la* in  
brown,

"He dwells in the backwoods places, and we *tra-la* in  
town;

"His every-day clothes, *ting-a-ling*, are fine as a fellow  
needs

"That sings in the thick-set hedges and lurks in the  
tangled weeds.

"We dwell in the elm-tree arches, the next-door neigh-  
bors to man,

"And, *trill away, thrill away, trill*, as free of our lives as  
we can.

"We are the birds of Baltimore — orange and ebon all —

"Bear his name and carry his fame when marble tablets  
fall.

"Lord Calvert's colors are our own, they never fade nor  
die;

"Sure to shine as the rosy glow to light a June-born sky.  
"We have come from Magnolia Land, from islands on  
the lee,  
"Where the cactus builds the flowers like coral in the sea.  
"We are Orioles, every one, *cavaliers, cavaliers!*  
"We sing out the song with a will — for June in the  
North, three cheers !"

Then in the momentary hush a meadow-lark begins,  
And then a shower beats faint tattoo upon the tinkling  
linns.

A goldfinch sings in ricochet her fine and filtered  
notes,

Cat-birds whine from a brier bush and blue jays clear  
their throats;

With plaintive tenderness a dove, as if an echo sighed,  
Reminds me of a little boy who moaned like her, and  
died;

And then the laugh of children small, who never grieved  
or sinned,

Sweet as an apple-blossom drift comes snowing down  
the wind.

The Service of Song all over, and over the wind and  
rain,

My liveried birds of beauty flew to their work amain;  
They sought a place for their hammock and found it in  
the ash,

—At a sparrow come to spy them they made a valiant  
dash ! —

One flew with flax from the silk-weed and bits of crim-  
son yarn,

One trailed a tangle of worsted and lichen from the  
barn;

They tugged small bundles of fibers, the filaments of roots,  
And played a little, while they wrought, a pair of magic flutes;  
They robbed the grass of a ribbon, a spool of a "bite" of thread,  
One hair from a horse's mane, two from a maiden's head;  
They came with down from the willow, a fleece from an old fence rail,  
Silken tape from a spreading beech, a tuft from a squirrel's tail.  
They flew through the air like shuttles, and wrought in their loom of love,  
Drew woof and warp without fingers, and wattled, knit, and wove.  
A robin in his dull red vest, that watched them from a larch,  
With an angry cry and swoop they brought to "right about" and "march."  
The days swept by in splendid state, the hammock swung at last,  
So frail, so firm, the ratlines taut, the life-lines knotted fast.  
Then swiftly grew the ash-tree leaves, and thatched the cottage roof,  
And two, like hands in blessing spread, to keep the world aloof.  
The miracle of life began, the woven walls of gray  
Were tremulous with new-born breath and four small pulses' play.  
It turned a purse with golden notes; I heard their tiny tone;

It turned a homestead desolate, the children fledged  
and flown.  
Here now, the hammock and the branch dismantled,  
silent lie,  
The tuneful tenants gone abroad to find a kinder sky;  
So may we all, by Grace of God, good-by, dear hearts,  
good-by!

---

## AUGUST LILIES.

## I.

DIED last night at twelve o'clock  
The richest month of all the year,  
Her belted grain in sheaf and shock  
Like gold encampments far and near.  
The rose-tree mourns in spider's crape,  
At half-mast stands the hollyhock,  
The rock that five-leaved ivies drape  
Has dared to rob some prince of Tyre  
And wear his robe of purple fire.

## II.

The lively locust's rattling watch  
Is always busy running down,  
The cricket sings its breathless catch  
And sunflowers lift the yellow crown.  
As if a fairies' grave-yard lent  
Its slender bones to dance a match,  
Cicadæ, knees and elbows bent,  
In flurries whirl, a crazy set,  
To click of Moorish castanet.

## III.

Unto this August, Time has told  
    Down thirty perfect days in rhyme,  
Unsullied hours a minute old,  
    A minute from celestial clime,  
With two full moons to shine the while,  
Twelve hours were silver, twelve were gold;  
    Five Sabbath mornings' peaceful smile  
To light the radiant weeks along,  
With flush of leaf and flights of song.

## IV.

O Queen of Months, a splendid dower  
    Was thine, and yet thou could'st not wait  
For all this wealth one little hour,  
    But met inevitable fate!  
Broad leaves have hid all summer long  
    A precious thing beside my gate.  
One after one each floral throng  
Had perished, but those leaves still kept  
Their secret as if something slept.

## V.

A hand has put those leaves aside,  
    Lo, August Lilies light the day!  
So fair, as if some angel died  
    And took this monumental way;  
So pure, as if some Singer sweet  
Had touched it with her lips, and sighed  
    Because these chaliced lives so fleet,  
These dear Day Lilies, only last  
While each swift day is going past.  
And yet why not? Why tarry here

Till dark and drear November comes  
To play the Dead March on its drums  
Of sleet, and freeze the falling tear?

---

### JANUARY ROSES.

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

#### I.

THE snows had swarmed from their cloudy hives  
And the air was ghostly gray,  
And the flakes that muffled the doubtful day  
Whirled hither and yon in a hurrying way  
As if they were human lives.

#### II.

They traversed the day-time one by one  
And shrouded the earth at last,  
And they lay in state when the strife was past  
And the Dead March played by a dying blast  
Was a sorrow set to a tune.

#### III.

For over it all, drift, billow, and wreath,  
Where blue-bells rang in perpetual mass  
With symphony sweeter than bells of brass,  
. And violets scattered the sky in the grass  
Were the chilly white blossoms of death.

#### IV.

Over the roses that sweetened the world,  
Daffodils golden and gay,  
The dying delight of the new-mown hay,  
Splendor of June and the promise of May,  
Those blossoms of snow were whirled.

## V.

The shadows stir on the carpeted floor  
Like restless souls in their sleep  
As the drowsy fire-lights flicker and leap  
To the winds that bury the noon-mark deep  
That scars the sill of my door.

## VI.

And sadly I thought how Izrael waves  
His wings till the tremulous sod,  
Startled to life as the rock to the rod,  
Breaks as the sea with the billows abroad  
In ripples and billows of graves;—

## VII.

Graves of my dead,— till the clods are akin,  
The grasses own cousins by blood,  
The glow of a lip may color a bud,  
The ebb of a life swell the foliage flood,  
The dust of a darling have been  
But disguised when the daisies begin.

## VIII.

Mid glamour and gloom a messenger came,  
And a casket strange he bore  
Laden with roses, and never before  
Came a sweeter gift to a prince's door,  
Sweet flowers with a household name.

## IX.

Some buds were a-glow like a great live coal,  
And some were like cloth of gold,  
And some dawn-pearl, as if they would hold,  
Each shell of a leaf in delicate fold,  
The breath of a saintly soul.

## X.

Arabian genii filled the room,  
 Birds in song and bees adrift,  
 And a soft sky shone through a downy rift,  
 And the stately lilies began to lift,  
 And snow outside and the gloom !

## XI.

Where the Trinity River lights afar  
 Palmetto grove, Magnolia land,  
 All gathered alive by a woman's hand  
 Those roses grew in a garden grand,  
 The State of a single Star.

## XII.

The flower-de-luce is wilted and furled,  
 No matter for that, be strong !  
 Gird up, dear heart ! though the winter is long  
 And listen in faith to the bluebird's song,  
 'Tis Summer *somewhere* in the world !

---

## THE COLORED MARBLE.

ON marble beds where violets die  
 And the moss-rose pillows its pride,  
 The marble looks like an azure sky  
 Where a cloudless day has died.

The years go by, and out of the shroud  
 The statue stands naked in noon;  
 Out of the tint and out of the cloud  
 Of a long-forgotten June !

## THE ROSE AND THE ROBIN.

THE yellow rose leaves falling down  
Pay golden toll to passing June,  
The robin's breast of golden brown  
Is trembling with an ancient tune.

The rose will bloom another year,  
The robin and his wife will come,  
But he who sees may not be here,  
And he who sings be dumb.

Thy grace be mine, oh yellow rose !  
My heart like thine its blossoms shed,  
Grow fragrant to the fragrant close,  
And sweetest when I'm dead.

And so like thee I'll pay my way  
In coin that time can never rust,  
And footsteps sound another day  
Though feet have turned to dust !

Thy gift be mine, oh singing bird !  
My song like thine round home and heart:  
To Song, God never said the word,  
" To dust return, for dust thou art ! "

## ROSE, LILY, AND MAY-FLOWER.

## THE ROSE.

## I.

**I**N Sharon's Vale some roses grew  
 Three thousand years ago,  
 And bloomed their little season through,  
 And shed their leaves when winter blew  
 Like flakes of fragrant snow.

## II.

A royal hand did gather them  
 And set them in his Song,  
 You cannot find his diadem  
 But broidered on his Hebrew hem  
 The roses grow along.

## III.

The stately Ages tread aside  
 Where'er those roses are,  
 Though realms have vanished, diamonds died,  
 Old Sharon's children yet abide  
 As deathless as a star.

## CHRIST'S LILIES.

## I.

In Galilee some lilies hung  
 Their chalices of white,  
 And to and fro their fragrance flung,  
 So many cups of incense swung  
 Before the Lord of light.

## II.

The Turk and Christian trod to death  
 The glory of the shrine,

And left no lily's grave beneath  
Nor speechless eloquence of breath  
To sweeten Palestine.

## III.

These idle princes of their race  
Have never died at all;  
Behold them in Judean grace  
As rallied round a holier place  
Within His instant call,

## IV.

They smile and wait at God's right hand  
And grow of strange account,  
For angels watch them as they stand  
Amid that lily-garden land,  
The Sermon on the Mount.

## THE MAY-FLOWER.

## I.

A Pilgrim Flower — a troubled sea,  
A winter wild and white,  
Its only world was on the lea,  
A tempest caught and swept it free  
To wilderness and night.

## II.

Oh, Christians, for the May-Flower pray,  
Each petal is a soul !  
Adrift and doomed this Flower of May,  
Oh, women, weep your hearts away,  
Oh, gray-haired Sexton, toll !

## III.

December waited gaunt and grim  
    Within its lair of snow,  
The shaggy forests ghostly dim  
Stood up and sang a funeral hymn  
    Two hundred years ago.

## IV.

That stranded flower was strangely blent  
    Of amaranth and May;  
From marble tower to miner's tent,  
Where'er the Anglo-Saxon went  
    It brightens night and day.

## V.

Oh, roses, lilies, flowers of May !  
    Akin to human kind,  
The Ages bear ye on their way —  
Bound in one sweet and rare bouquet  
    An endless Spring is twined.

## POEMS OF NATURE.

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### THE SUN THAT NEVER SETS.

ON some long day of June take a terrestrial globe with all the equipments for measuring the days, the nights, and the twilights; the route of the shadow and the sun; for catching Everywhere in the fine web of lines and parallels. Find Alaska whence Campbell's doleful wolf has been raising its "long howl" for a lifetime. You are not looking beyond the border where floats the Flag. You have not gone from home.

Now turn the globe until Alaska is precisely at the sunset-line, then cross the continent with your fore-finger to the coast of Maine. It is sunrise, and the globe has not moved at all. At the same instant closing day in Alaska, opening day in Maine, it is one country and one sun.

Of old, San Francisco was at the Western edge of this eminent domain, but now it is as far from Alaska as it is from the singing pines of our farthest East, and by this measurement in the center of the United States. The wisdom of purchasing Alaska has been doubted, but lo, its utility is made manifest at last. It is a spot whereon the mighty sun may halt a moment just as he makes a splendid lift above the woods and fields of Maine. We hear something now and then of the British music whose

"Morning drum beats round the world."

I think it is a grander thing to say the Sun can never bid good-night to the Great Republic.

## THE SUN THAT NEVER SETS.

## I.

PACIFIC's waters turn to wine,  
The ripe red sun is glowing down,  
With Orient pomp the gloomy pine  
Wears rubies in its plumpy crown  
And shadows on its column brown.

## II.

With click and stroke of slender oar  
The fishers time their homeward turn,  
And pulling for Aleutian shore,  
Where dusky red the watch-fires burn,  
They trail their glittering spoils astern.

## III.

I see them slide, as petrels skim  
The glassy scallops of the deep,  
I hear their wild barbaric hymn  
Re-sung by pale-faced cliff and steep,  
As children sing themselves to sleep.

## IV.

"Good-night" in words from loving lips,  
"Good-night, good-night," the girls reply,  
"Good-night" from cañon's cold eclipse,  
"Good-night" again from skiff and sky,  
And day is dead, and voices die.

## V.

The flickering sea-birds seek the crag  
In dotted lines of hazy white,  
The Outpost lowers the Stellar Flag

Damp with the mists of sheeted night,  
A gray and ghostly Carmelite.

VI.

'Tis sunset on Alaska's rocks,  
Aleutian Isle and Behring's Bay,  
'Tis sunrise where Atlantic shocks  
The coast of Maine in rugged play,  
And domes of forest shed the day.

VII.

Sunrise in Maine ! The starry wing  
Takes flight at morning gun and glow,  
From tapering mast salutes the King  
Whose parting foot-prints plainly show  
Alaska land a breath ago  
And burning yet like blood on snow.

VIII.

I hear the axemen's clock-tick beat,  
I hear the twang of breakfast horn,  
The Yankee Doodle in the street  
And Yankee Doodle in the corn ;  
One day not dead, another born,  
Good-night is married to Good-morn !

IX.

All hail, thou Sun magnificent;  
And hail, ye Flag and Flame well met  
From Orient to Occident !  
These colors, O great Light, are wet  
With splendors of thy golden set  
And Yesterday is lingering yet.

## X.

Strong as thou art, and swift as strong,  
 It takes thee nine long hours to march  
 Grand Rounds from noon to noon along  
 The azure of the Federal arch—  
 Majestic sweep of boulevards,  
 The realm and route of travelled stars—  
 That spans, as rainbows span the showers,  
 All oaks of hearts and hopes of flowers,  
 As thoughts untold may thrill and throng  
 One mighty syllable of song.

## XI.

How stirs my heart to think this Land  
 Bound in long day-time's yellow zone,  
 Maine and Alaska hand in hand,  
 The self-same hour beholds in one  
 A rising and a setting sun !

## XII.

It brings my fancy to the knee  
 And kindles up my soul to see  
 Him play upon meridian lines  
 That string the globe as harps are strung;  
 To watch each fibre as it shines,  
 And hear, distinct as if it rung,  
 The Music of the Union flung  
 From this celestial instrument.  
 Perhaps an angel choir has lent  
 Some Israfeel of rarest powers  
 To help this harper of the Lord,  
 And grandly sing, word after word :  
 This land is mine, is yours, is Ours.

## THE VANE ON THE SPIRE.

DURING the bitter and death-dealing days of the winter and spring of 1872 I often watched the gilded arrow that swings upon the spire of a neighboring church. And it always had a meaning for me—sometimes sad, a few times glad, and always true. Day after day, week after week, that arrow pointed North—pointed East; always North, always East—like the finger of Fate. The chill winds blew; the cold storms came; there were beds of languishing; there were new-made graves. Frost, sorrow, and death ruled the air in company. And all the while the arrow told the story.

At last there came some genial days, when flowers blossomed, birds sang, the weak grew strong, and the graves were green.

The arrow on the spire had swung round to the South; it told the story still. It was no longer the finger of Fate, but a thing of beauty—a piece of aerial jewelry. It had eloquence enough to inspire a little song, had there been anybody to write it.

## THE VANE ON THE SPIRE.

THERE'S an arrow aloft with a feather'd shaft  
That never has flown at the bow-string's draft,  
And the goldsmith has hidden the blacksmith's craft.

For its heart is of iron, its gleam of gold,  
It is pointed to pierce and barbed to hold,  
And its wonderful story is hardly told.

It is poised on a finger from sun to sun,  
And it catches the glimmer of dawn begun,  
And is floating in light when the day is done.

And it turns at the touch of a viewless hand,  
And it swings in the air like a wizard's wand,  
By the tempest whirled and the zephyr fanned.

And the sinewy finger that cannot tire  
Is the lifted hush of the old church spire  
That vanishes out as heaven is nigher;

And the arrow upon it the rusted vane  
As true to its master as faith to fane,  
That is swinging forever in sun and rain.

Right about to the North ! And the trumpets blow  
And the shivering air is dim with snow,  
And the earth grows dumb and the brooks run slow;

And the shaggy Arctic, chilled to the bone,  
Is craunching the world with a human moan,  
And the clank of a chain in the frozen zone;

And the world is dead in its seamless shroud,  
And the stars wink slow in the rifted cloud,  
And the owl in the oak complains aloud.

But the arrow is true to the iceberg's realm,  
As the rudder staunch in the ghastly whelm  
With a hero by to handle the helm !

Is it welded with frost as iron with fire ?  
Up with a blue-jacket ! Clamber the spire  
And swing it around to the point of desire !

It sways to the East ! And the icy rain  
With the storm's "long roll" on the window pane  
And a diamond point on the crystal vane.

And the cattle stand with the wind astern,  
And the routes of the rain on eave and urn —  
As the drops are halted and frozen in turn —

Are such pendants of wonder as cave and mine  
Never gave to the gaze when the torches shine,  
But right out of Heaven and half divine !

Ah, it swings due South to the zephyr's thrill !  
In the yellow noon it lies as still  
As a speckled trout by the drowsy mill,

While the bugle of Gabriel wakes the sod  
And the beautiful life in the speechless clod,  
Till the crowded June is a smile for God !

Resurrection to-day ! For the roses spoke !  
Resurrection to-day ! For the rugged oak  
In a live green billow rolled and broke.

And the spider feels for her silken strings,  
And the honey-bee hums and the world has wings,  
And blent with the blue the bluebird sings.

While the cloud is ablaze with the bended bow,  
And the waters white with the lilies' snow,  
On the motionless arrow, all in a row,

Are four little sparrows that pipe so small  
Their carol distils as the dew-drops fall,  
And we only *see* they are singing at all !

Now the arrow is swung with a sweep so bold  
Where the Day has been flinging his garments gold  
Till they stain the sky with a glow untold.

Ah, the cardinal point of the wind is West !  
And the clouds bear down in a fleet abreast,  
And the world is as still as a child at rest !

There's a binnacle light like an angry star,  
And the growl of a gun with its crash and jar,  
And the roll of a drum where the angels are !

And it tumbles its freight on the dancing grain,  
And it beats into blossom the buds again,  
And it brightens a world baptized in rain,

And it gladdens the earth as it drifts along,  
And the meadow is green and the corn is strong,  
And the brook breaks forth in the same old song !

And I looked for the arrow — it hung there yet,  
With the drops of the rain its barb was wet,  
And the sun shone out in a crimson set ;

And behold, aloft in the ruddy shine  
Where the crystal water again was wine,  
And it hallowed the dart like a touch divine !

Under the sun and under the moon,  
Silver at midnight, golden at noon,  
Could Dian have lost it out of her hair ?  
Phœbus's quiver have shaken it there ?  
That wonderful arrow sweeping the air !

---

#### THE SHATTERED RAINBOW.

WHEN blazed the trinket of the cloud abroad,  
The bent and broken jewelry of God,  
That fragment of a ring — its other part  
Was lost, I dreamed, within the forest's heart.  
And when October came with eager clasp,  
The jewel shivered in his frosty grasp

And showered the maples with celestial red —  
The oaks were sunsets though the days were dead,  
The green was gold, the willows drooped in wine,  
The ash was fire, the humblest shrub divine.

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## THE GOSPEL OF THE OAK.

## WAR TIME.

UP to the Sun magnificently near,  
The Lord did build a Californian oak,  
And took no Sabbath in the thousandth year,  
But builded on until it bravely broke  
Into that realm wherein the morning light  
Walks to and fro upon the top of night !  
Around that splendid shaft no hammers rang,  
Nor giants wrought nor truant angels sang,  
But gentle winds and painted birds did bear  
Its corner-stones of glory through the air;  
Grand volumes green rolled up like cloudy weather,  
And birds and stars went in and out together;  
When Day on errands from the Lord came down,  
It stepped from Heaven to that leafy crown !

God's mighty mast with all its sails unfurled,  
That ought to make a Druid of the world,  
Some Vandal girdled with a zone of death,  
A life of ages perished in a breath !  
Good night, Live Oak ! Proud admiral, farewell !  
The world has wailed when meaner monarchs fell !

The year went on, and with it marched sublime,  
Month after month, the journeymen of Time.

Then came the May, such wings as angels wear,  
Buds in her hands and blossoms in her hair;  
Above that oak she shook her flowing sleeves —  
The poor dead tree laughed out with living leaves !  
Thank God ! Too vast, too grand to die forlorn  
It lived right on ! Brave heart of oak, good morn !

I'd be a Roman for the omen grand  
That thunders on the left through all the land —  
God and the Fathers' tree forever stand !  
Oh, growth immortal, reddened in the rain  
That beats out hearts as tempests beat the grain,  
All wrongs died out like breath upon a blade,  
A hunted world fled panting to thy shade —  
Thy roots have searched earth's bosom all around,  
Felt out the graves that make it holy ground —  
Like living hands with love and faith been laid  
In benediction on the sleeping dead !

---

#### THE NEW CRAFT IN THE OFFING.

THE WAS a beautiful night on a beautiful deep,  
And the man at the helm had just fallen asleep,  
And the watch on the deck, with his head on his breast,  
Was beginning to dream that another's it pressed,  
When the look-out aloft cried, "A sail ! ho ! a sail !"  
And the question and answer went rattling like hail:  
"A sail ! ho ! a sail !" "Where away?" "No'th-no'th-  
West!"  
"Make her out?" "No, your honor." The din drowned  
the rest.  
There indeed is the stranger, the first in these seas,

Yet she drives boldly on in the teeth of the breeze.  
Now her bows to the breakers she steadily turns,  
Oh ! how brightly the light of her binnacle burns !  
Not a signal for Saturn this rover has given,  
No salute for our Venus, the flag-star of heaven:  
Not a rag or a ribbon adorning her spars,  
She has saucily sailed by "the red planet Mars";  
She has doubled triumphant the cape of the Sun,  
And the sentinel stars without firing a gun !  
"Helm a-port !" "Show a light !" "She will run us  
aground !"  
"Fire a gun !" "Bring her to !" "Sail a-hoy !"  
"Whither bound ?"

Avast there, ye lubbers ! Leave the rudder alone;  
'Tis a craft in commission — the Admiral's own;  
And she sails with sealed orders, unopened as yet,  
Though her anchors she weighed before Lucifer set.  
Ah, she sails by a chart no draughtsman could make,  
Where each cloud that can trail and each wave that can  
break;  
Where that sparkling flotilla, the Asteroids, lie,  
Where the scarf of red Morning is flung on the sky;  
Where the breath of the sparrow is staining the air —  
On the chart that she bears you will find them all  
there !  
Let her pass on in peace to the port whence she came,  
With her trackings of fire and her streamers of flame !

## THE NORTHERN LIGHTS.

TO claim the Arctic came the Sun,  
With banners of the burning zone;  
Unrolled upon their airy spars  
They froze beneath the light of stars;  
And there they float, those streamers old,  
Those Northern Lights, forever cold !

---

## RHYMES OF THE RIVER.

O H River far flowing,  
How broad thou art growing !  
And the sentinel head-lands wait grimly for thee;  
    And Euroclydon urges  
    The bold-riding surges,  
That in white-crested lines gallop in from the sea.  
  
O bright-hearted river,  
With crystalline quiver,  
Like a sword from its scabbard, far-flashing abroad !  
    And I think as I gaze  
    On the tremulous blaze,  
That thou surely wert drawn by an angel of God !  
  
Through the black heart of night,  
Leaping out to the light,  
Thou art reeking with sunset and dyed with the dawn;  
    Cleft the emerald sod —  
    Cleft the mountains of God —  
And the shadows of roses yet rusted thereon !  
  
Where willows are weeping,  
Where shadows are sleeping,

Where the frown of the mountain lies dark on thy crest;

Arcturus now shining,

Arbutus now twining,

And "my castles in Spain" gleaming down in thy breast;

Then disastered and dim,

Swinging sullen and grim,

Where the old ragged shadows of hovels are shed;

Creeping in, creeping out,

As in dream, or in doubt,

In the reeds and the rushes slow rocking the dead.

When all crimson and gold,

Slowly home to the fold

Do the fleecy clouds flock to the gateway of even,

Then, no longer brook-born,

But a way paved with morn,

Ay, a bright golden street to the city of Heaven !

In the great stony heart

Of the feverish mart,

Is the throb of thy pulses pellucid, to-day;

By gray mossy ledges,

• By green velvet edges,

Where the corn waves its sabre, thou glidest away.

Broad and brave, deep and strong,

Thou art lapsing along;

And the stars rise and fall in thy turbulent tide,

As light as the drifted

White swan's breast is lifted,

Or a June fleet of lilies at anchor may ride.

And yet, gallant river,

On-flashing forever,

That hast cleft the broad world on thy way to the main,  
I would part from thee here,  
With a smile and a tear,  
And a Hebrew, read back to thy fountains again.

Ah, well I remember,  
Ere dying December  
Would fall like a snow-flake and melt on thy breast,  
O'er thy waters so narrow  
The little brown sparrow  
Used to send his low song to his mate on the nest.

With a silvery skein  
Wove of snow and of rain,  
Thou didst wander at will through the sweet summer  
land,—  
All the air a sweet psalm,  
And the meadow a palm,—  
As a blue vein meanders a liberal hand.

When the school-master's daughter  
With her hands scooped the water,  
And laughingly proffered the crystal to me,  
Oh, there ne'er sparkled up  
A more exquisite cup  
Than the pair of white hands that were brimming with  
thee !

And there all together,  
In bright summer weather,  
Did we loiter with thee along thy green brink;  
And how silent we grew  
If the robin came too,  
When he looked up to pray, when he bent down to  
drink !

Ah, where are the faces,  
 From out thy still places,  
 That so often smiled back in those soft days of May ?  
     As we bent hand in hand,  
     Thou didst double the band,  
 As idle as lilies—and fleeting as they !

Like the dawn in the cloud  
 Lay a babe in its shroud,  
 And a rose-bud was clasped in its frozen white hand :—  
     At the mother's last look  
     It had opened the book,  
 As if sweet-breathing June were abroad in the land !

O pure placid river  
 Make music forever  
 In the gardens of Paradise, hard by the throne !  
     For on thy far shore,  
     Gently drifted before,  
 We may find the lost blossoms that once were our own.

Ah, beautiful river,  
 Flow onward forever !  
 Thou art grander than Avon, and sweeter than Ayr;  
     If a tree has been shaken,  
     If a star has been taken,  
 In thy bosom we look—bud and Pleiad are there !

I take up the old words,  
 Like the song of dead birds,  
 That were breathed when I stood farther off from the sea:  
     When I heard not its hymn,  
     When the headlands were dim :—  
 Shall I ever again weave a rhythm for thee ?

## THE CHRYSALIS.

**A** COFFIN gray and spotted with gold,  
 With a mulberry leaf for bier,  
 And silken shroud with a silver fold,  
 On a shelf is lying near.

They say when April comes to the door,  
 And the blue-eyed foundlings wake,  
 The humble thing that was dead before  
 From its silken sleep shall break;

A folio flower, in duplicate done,  
 Like the face in the eyes of a wife,  
 Two leaves shall open slow in the sun  
 With a dissyllabic life.

## MASSACHUSETTS SENDS GREETING.

**I** MET a man away down East  
 Who towered amid the eight-rowed corn  
 Raccoons could finish at a feast,  
 And listened for the dinner-horn.  
 A crow aloft on a hemlock limb  
 Looked black at what would fall to him.  
 The bilious earth lay blank beneath,  
 His angry hoe showed signs of teeth,  
 So nicked and notched with glance and glint  
 At bowlder gray and sparkling flint.  
 He saw a pumpkin's yellow blow  
 And touched it with his thoughtful toe,  
 Prophetic flower of by-and-by,  
 Forerunner of one pumpkin pie !

"Out West? Jes' so! From Illinoi?  
My Jem is there — my oldest boy —  
And John's in Kansas, so is Jane,  
She married one Elnathan Payne ;—  
And mother too — *she* wants to go,  
No musket ever scattered so ;  
And then it allus p'ints one way —  
Right where them big per-aries lay.  
Betwixt them two — Death and the West —  
They git our youngest, strongest, best.  
It's queer the grave-yard keeps a-growin'  
As ef nobody dreamed of goin'!  
It's there right where them brooms o' trees  
Are sweepin' *nothin'* in the breeze.  
A queen-bee in an empty hive  
Is all o' mine that's left alive.  
I call them *dead* I never see,  
The West or Heaven's all one to me —  
I wait an' wait — God give me grace!  
They don't come back from *either* place.

"Them miles an' miles of level land,  
And ev'ry tree brought up by hand,  
The sky shut down around the green  
As snug as any soup-tureen.  
Poor show for David with his sling  
An' not a pebble fit to fling."  
So talked the Massachusetts man  
And paused for breath and then began :  
"I hear you have," the farmer said,  
"A creature with a horse's head,  
A cricket's body, dragon's wings,  
The long hind legs of a kangaroo,

The hungriest of created things  
That eats a landskip through an' through ;  
A boarding-house for bugs may be  
The place for you but not for me."

"Alas, old man," I sadly said,  
"They are, indeed, most nobly fed ;  
You taunt us with no dainty touch,  
But had those creatures boarded *here*  
It would have saved us many a fear,  
They could not harm you very much,  
And then it cannot be denied,  
They surely would have starved and died."

"I wouldn't swap the old Bay State,"  
The farmer cried with voice elate,—  
He stood upright in every joint  
As any exclamation-point,  
And hoe and stone struck instant fire  
As if he thus touched off his ire,—  
"I wouldn't swap the old Bay State,  
Its rugged rocks and mountains great,  
For land as level as a hone,  
All ready fenced and seeded down.  
Our grain stands slender in the shock,  
The grists are light we send to mill,  
But then we gave you Plymouth Rock  
Where Freedom's clearins' first begin;  
The world takes *stock* in Bunker Hill,  
Where Freedom put the sickle in.  
You've Injuns West but we're ahead,  
Our Boston Mohawks allus led,  
That took a cargo of Bohea  
An' steeped a drawin' in the sea

An' asked young Liberty to tea !  
They snuff at Boston, and they dub  
The good old town the Yankee 'Hub.'  
What all it means I never knew,  
*My* way at least, it may be true :  
I know its gritty boys go out  
    Like spokes of wheels to reach the rim  
That binds creation all about  
Till West an' East an' South an' North,  
    You hear their whistle or their hymn  
Around the felly of the earth !"

The old man heard the dinner-horn  
And stumped away among the corn.  
The truth had lighted up his face  
And lent the furrowed features grace.  
He turned and called across the lot,  
"There's one thing more I 'most forgot ;  
Ef you *see* Jem or John or Jane,  
    Jes' tell 'em where you've been to-day;  
That I yit walk the narrow lane  
Whose end is growin' mighty plain,  
    And that I send 'em far away  
One word from Massachusetts sod,  
The blessing of their Fathers' God,  
And tell 'em too, an Eastern boy  
Must make a *man* in Illinois."  
Such hearty, homely words he spoke,  
The chimney wore a plume of smoke,  
The wife stood watching at the door,  
Good-by, old man, forevermore.

## PRAIRIE LAND.

THE prairies are the empty beds  
Deserted on some nameless day  
By seas that raised their crested heads  
And took their crystal clothes away.  
Not empty now ! A grander tide  
Than those of old that ebbed and died,  
• Of golden seas that cannot drown,  
Of oceans where no Clarence lies,  
All rustling round the loving skies  
That fit the shore-line like a crown.

These feeble images convey  
No picture of this realm to-day,  
Ye golden seas and tides away !

Behold the stately Northwest stands  
A queenly figure, firm, compact  
In one great grandeur by the act  
Of God and man. One splendid fact,  
As if the marble statue woke  
Completed at a single stroke —  
'Tis thus to me the Northwest stands  
And fronts the hungry world, to hear  
The prayer of Christendom for bread,  
And holds the answer forth in both her hands !  
The heaping harvests of the year  
Upon her prairie palms are spread  
From parallel to parallel.  
The lines that gypsies read to tell  
A fortune, are by fortunes hid  
As Pharaoh by pyramid.

The men still live who might have seen  
    This land without a yesterday —  
An empire of unfurrowed green,  
Unpeopled paradise of bees,  
    Unsown, unmown, unknown, and gay  
With floral aborigines;  
    An empty wilderness of grass  
As silent as a looking-glass.

The prairie schooners' canvas white  
    Like eggs of ants in beaded line  
Would creep all day, all day in sight,  
    As blossoms on a creeping vine.  
Sometimes the drowning sun would turn  
    That white to crimson as he loomed,  
Would watch to see the canvas burn  
    Like Moses' Bush all unconsumed;  
Would make a trinket of the train,  
Then slowly sink beneath the main.  
    Oh, world so utterly alone !  
    Oh, nights that weep and winds that moan !

Sometimes a group of horsemen tall  
    Would ride with day-time at their backs,  
Their slender shadows weirdly fall  
    In strange eclipse along their tracks;  
Ride on before like ghosts that guide  
And leave no foot-prints as they ride;  
Wolves turn and look a glittering growl  
And slowly winks the prairie owl,  
    Till naked Night lets down her hair  
    And lies along her level lair

## POEMS OF HEROISM.

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### MARY BUTLER'S RIDE.

THE story of Mary Butler's Ride is unembellished truth. To one of her grandsons, J. M. Taylor, Esq., of New York, I am indebted for the incident, and to another, the Honorable Arthur M. Eastman, of New Hampshire, for a spray from the old Blush Rose, set out by Lieutenant Eastman, of the Minute-Men, one hundred years ago. It lies upon the table, as I write, a withered but an eloquent witness, as if to perfume the poem with its fragrant testimony.

To hear men say — those far-away boys of hers, and yet busy in life's affairs, — "Many a time I have heard her tell the story!" brings the gray-eyed Mary Butler strangely near. It is like raising a dead century to instant resurrection.

The rhymes and the rose leaves are a little love-token to the future.

### MARY BUTLER'S RIDE.

#### I.

EBENEZER EASTMAN, of Gilmanton, is dead;—

At least they had him buried full fifty years ago;—  
The gray White Mountain granite they set above his  
head,

With some graven words upon it, to let the neigh-  
bors know

Precisely what it was that made the grasses grow

So wondrous rank and strong. How they rippled in  
the wind,  
As if nobody ever died, nobody ever sinned !  
To that old Bible name of his what eloquence was lent  
When its owner marched to battle,— not a ration, not  
a tent,  
Nor a promise nor a sign of a Continental cent !  
Ho, Ebenezer Eastman ! We'll call the roll again,—  
Ho, dead and gone Lieutenant of the old-time Minute-  
Men !

## II.

Plowing land for turnips, with awkward Buck and  
Bright,  
Was stout Lieutenant Eastman, one lovely day in  
June;  
He "hawed" them to the left and he "geed" them to  
the right,  
And they slowly came about in the lazy summer  
noon,  
He humming to himself the fragment of a tune,  
Which he would croon at night to the baby-boy who lay  
In basswood trough becradled first, a week ago that day!  
I count the times the Blush Rose bloomed. Exactly  
ninety-eight  
Since Eastman's fingers planted it beside the garden  
gate.  
Almost one hundred years ago ! I know 'tis rather late  
To muster in the furloughed man and make him march  
again,—  
But smell the old Blush Roses ! They are just as sweet  
as then !

## III.

All at a flying gallop a rider swings in sight,  
Pulls up beside the fallow and gives the view-hal-  
loo,—  
His horse's flanks are black, but his neck is foamy  
white:—  
“ Turn out ! Lieutenant Eastman ! There's some-  
thing else to do !  
The red-coats are a-swarming ! Your summer plow-  
ing's through ! ”  
No other word — away ! And the rattling of the hoofs  
Was like the rain from traveling clouds along the cabin  
roofs.  
The plowman turned his cattle out ; he saddled up  
the bay,  
And he rallied put the wilderness upon that summer  
day,  
And the Minute-Men of Gilmanton to Boston marched  
away.  
About the Mother ? Well, she watched beside the cabin  
door,  
And rocked the baby's basswood boat upon the pun-  
cheon floor.

## IV.

Days grew long in Gilmanton, and weeds among the  
corn;  
The quoiting-ground was grassy, and louder ran the  
rill;  
The wrestling-match was over,— the smithy was for-  
lorn,—  
The spiders in the empty door had swung their  
webs at will,—

The champions had gone to Bunker's smoky Hill,  
To try the quaint, old-fashioned "lock" they practised  
on the Green,  
And such a game of tough "square hold" the world  
had seldom seen !  
About the Father? Only this: He fought in Stark's  
brigade,  
On Charlestown Neck, that dusty day. A splendid  
mark he made ;  
He never flinched a single inch when British cannon  
played,  
But foddered up an old rail-fence with Massachusetts  
hay,  
Stood out the battle at the rack, and stoutly blazed  
away !

## v.

Lo, through the smoky glory, that human Flower-de-luce,  
The gray-eyed Mary Butler, Lieutenant Eastman's  
wife !  
Her pallid cheek and brow like a holy flag of truce,  
Her heart as sweet and red as a rose's inner life,  
No murmur on her lips, nor sign of any strife.  
Four days before the fight. Has the little woman heard  
From anybody Boston way? Nobody — not a word !

## vi.

Then up rose Mary Butler, and set her wheel at rest;  
She swept the puncheon floor, she washed the cottage pride,—  
The cottage pride of three weeks old, and dressed him  
in his best,—

She wound the clock that told the time her mother was  
a bride,

And porringer and spoon she deftly laid aside;  
She strung a clean white apron across the window  
panes,

And swung the kettle from the crane, for fear of rust-  
ing rains;

Then tossed the saddle on the bay and donned her  
linen gown,

And took the baby on before,— no looking round or  
down!

Full seventy miles to Cambridge town! Bring out  
your civic crown!

I think 'twill fit that brow of hers who sadly smiled and  
said:

"We'll *know* about your father, boy, and who is hurt or  
dead!"

The maple woods that round her stand so solemn in  
the calm,

Up and down are swaying slowly, like a singing-mas-  
ter's palm,

All together beating time,— not a soul to sing a psalm!

"There's been a dreadful battle!"— that's what the  
neighbors said,

"But when or where I cannot tell, nor who is hurt or  
dead."

#### VII.

Rugged maples broke their ranks to let the rider by,  
Fell in behind her noiseless as falls the stealthy  
dew;

Such heavy folds of starless dark in double shadow lie,

The slender bridle-path she treads can only just  
show through,  
And buried in the leafy miles was all the world she  
knew.

By muffled drum of partridge and jaunty jay-bird's fife,  
That mother made her lonely march,—that Continen-  
tal wife.

She never drew the bridle-rein till forty miles were  
done,

And on her ended journey shone the second setting  
sun,

And round the Bay, like battle-clock, tolled out the  
evening gun.

Talk not of pomps and tournaments ! If you had only  
seen

The royal ride from Gilmanton, the halt at Cambridge  
Green !

#### VIII.

Dust-bedimmed and weary, with a look as if she smiled,  
She melted through the haze of the summer's smoky  
gold !

Some Master's faded picture of Madonna and the Child,  
Born full a thousand years ago, and never growing  
old !

She heard old Putnam's kennel growl, the bells of  
Charlestown tolled;

She saw the golden day turn gray within an ashen  
shroud,

That showed the scarlet Regulars like lightning through  
a cloud.

Forth from the furnace and the fire Lieutenant East-  
man came,—

The smell of powder in his clothes and fragrance in his fame,—  
And met her bravely waiting there, who bore his boy and name!—  
She from the howling wilderness—he from the hell of men,  
The little woman called the roll; he called it back again!

## IX.

Then lightly to the pillion the gray-eyed wife he swung,  
A bundle on the saddle-bow all tenderly he placed,  
And, lost amid the leafy calms where cannon never rung,  
Away they rode to Gilmanton, her arm around his waist,  
No general's sash of crimson silk so rarely could have graced!  
Ah, Mary Butler cannot die, whatever sextons say,  
While yet her azure pulses keep their old heroic play.  
That splendid nerve of hers was strung like Morse's  
filmy bridge  
To hearts that beat at Gettysburg, Arkansas' dismal ridge.  
To Captain bold of cavalry, her grandchild's gallant son;  
To Sergeant of the Boys in Blue who wears the scars he won,  
Her dauntless soul electric,—a spark of fire divine,—  
Was flashed like thought by telegraph, along the slender line!  
The thing *she* was on Bunker's day an Angel might have been,

The song-bird to the wounded troops, the Nightingale  
to men,  
And on that later Flodden field lived Clara once again.  
A million men have lingered long, a million men have  
died,  
Who never saw a deed so grand as Mary Butler's  
Ride !

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## THE DEAD GRENADEIER.

ON the right of the battalion a grenadier of France,  
Struck through his iron harness by the lightning of  
a lance,  
His breast all wet with British blood, his brow with  
British breath,  
There fell defiant, face to face with England and with  
death.  
They made a mitre of his heart — they cleft it through  
and through —  
One half was for his legion, and the other for it too !  
The colors of a later day prophetic fingers shed,  
For lips were blue and cheeks were white and the *fleur*  
*de lis* was red !  
And the bugles blew, and the legion wheeled, and the  
grenadier was dead.  
And then the old commander rode slowly down the  
ranks,  
And thought how brief the journey grew between the  
battered flanks;  
And the shadows in the moonlight fell strangely into  
line

Where the battle's reddest riot pledged the richest of  
the wine,  
And the camp-fires flung their phantoms—all doing  
what they could  
To close the flinty columns up as old campaigners  
would !  
On he rode, the old commander, with the ensign in  
advance,  
And, as statued bronzes brighten with the smoky torch's  
glance,  
Flashed a light in all their faces, like the flashing of a  
lance,  
When, with brow all bare and solemn, "For the King!"  
he grandly said,  
"Lower the colors to the living — beat the ruffle for the  
dead !"  
And thrice the red silk flickered low its flame of royal  
fire,  
And thrice the drums moaned out aloud the mourner's  
wild desire.  
Ay, lower again thou crimson cloud — again ye drums  
lament —  
'Tis Rachel in the wilderness and Ramah in the tent !  
"Close up ! Right dress !" the Captain said, and they  
gathered under the moon,  
As the shadows glide together when the sun shines  
down at noon —  
A stranger at each soldier's right — ah, war's wild work  
is grim !—  
And so to the last of the broken line, and Death at the  
right of him !

And there, in the silence deep and dead, the Sergeant  
    called the roll,  
And the name went wandering down the lines as he  
    called a passing soul.  
Oh, then that a friendly mountain that summons might  
    have heard,  
And flung across the desert dumb the shadow of the  
    word,  
And caught the name that all forlorn along the legion  
    ran,  
And clasped it to its mighty heart and sent it back to  
    man !

There it stood, the battered legion, while the Sergeant  
    called the roll,  
And the name went wandering down the lines as he  
    called for a passing soul.  
Hurrah for the dumb, dead lion ! And a voice for the  
    grenadier  
Rolled out of the ranks like a drum-beat, and sturdily  
    answered " HERE ! "  
" He stood," cried the sons of thunder, and their hearts  
    ran over the brim,  
" He stood by the old battalion, and we'll always stand  
    by him !  
Ay, call for the grand crusader, and we'll answer to  
    the name."  
" And what will ye say ?" the Sergeant said. " Dead  
    on the field of fame ! "  
And dare ye call that dying ? The dignity sublime  
That gains a furlough from the grave, and then reports  
    to Time ?  
Doth earth give up the daisies to a little sun and rain,

And keep at their roots the heroes while weary ages  
wane?

Sling up the trumpet, Israfeel! Sweet bugler of our  
God,  
For nothing waits thy summons beneath this broken  
sod;  
They march abreast with the ages to the thunder on  
the right,  
For they bade the world "Good-morning" when the  
world had said "Good-night!"

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### THE CAPTAIN'S DRUM.

**F**RIDAY, the twenty-first of April, 1775, a horseman rode express into Enfield Street, Connecticut, with the tidings from Lexington Green. It was "Lecture day" and minister and people were in the meeting-house. Lieutenant Isaac Kibbe, the tavern-keeper who dispensed noggins of rum as befitted the times, procured drum and drummer, rudely put an end to the devotions, and Major Nathaniel Terry, a forefather of General Terry, U.S.A., led the valiant band away. The local historian reduces my Captain Abbey to the ranks.

Twenty-three years after, a child was born across the street from the meeting-house, and he dwells there yet. They had nothing against the boy as I can learn, but they gave him a Bible name that she would be a brave and reckless mother to confer upon her helpless infant in these later times, for they called him "Aholiab," and the child grew apace, furnished me with this historical incident, and has lived worthily and well "even unto this day."

How much unrecorded history, unbound and tattered pages of our national annals, is hidden away in the tills of cedar chests, between the leaves of Family Bibles, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress,

Baxter's Saint's Rest, Fox's Book of Martyrs, dusty old Josephuses, antiquated old almanacs and in feeble old memories, we shall never know. But the historic treasure-trove that quest or chance so frequently unearths, compels the regret that the knowledge of unnumbered deeds of virtue and of valor has utterly perished from the earth.

The great bells of centennial clocks, that during the last ten years have been striking round the land, have done more and better than to "make a joyful noise." They have stimulated research; they have startled multitudes with the truth that commercial values do not attach to everything exceeding precious; they have quickened dead incidents; they have been *resurrection* bells.

### THE CAPTAIN'S DRUM.

#### I.

IN Pilgrim land one Sabbath day  
The winter lay like sheep about  
The ragged pastures mullein-gray;  
The April sun shone in and out,  
The showers swept by in fitful flocks,  
And eaves ticked fast like mantel clocks.

#### II.

And now and then a wealthy cloud  
Would wear a ribbon broad and bright,  
And now and then a wingèd crowd  
Of shining azure flash in sight;  
So rainbows bend and blue-birds fly  
And violets show their bits of sky.

#### III.

To Enfield church throng all the town  
In quilted hood and bombazine,  
In beaver hat with flaring crown

And quaint vandyke and victorine,  
 And buttoned boys in roundabout  
 From calyx collars blossom out:

## IV.

Bandanas wave their feeble fire  
 And foot-stoves tinkle up the aisle,  
 A gray-haired Elder leads the choir  
 And girls in linsey-woolsey smile.  
 So back to life the beings glide  
 Whose very graves have ebbed and died.

## V.

One hundred years have waned, and yet  
 We call the roll, and not in vain,  
 For one whose flint-lock musket set  
 The echoes wild round Fort Duquesne,  
 And swelled the battle's powder-smoke  
 Ere Revolution's thunders woke.

## VI.

Lo, Thomas Abbey answers "Here!"  
 Within the dull long-metre place;  
 That day upon the parson's ear  
 And trampling down his words of grace  
 A horseman's gallop rudely beat  
 Along the splashed and empty street.

## VII.

The rider drew his dripping rein  
 And then a letter wasp-nest gray  
 That ran: "*The Concord Minute-Men*  
*And red-coats had a fight to-day.*

*To Captain Abbey this with speed."*

Ten little words to tell the deed.

## VIII.

The Captain read, struck out for home  
 The old quickstep of battle born,  
 Slung on once more a battered drum  
 That bore a painted unicorn,  
 Then right-about as whirls a torch  
 He stood before the sacred porch;—

## IX.

And then a murmuring of bees  
 Broke in upon the house of prayer,  
 And then a wind-song swept the trees,  
 And then a snarl from wolfish lair,  
 And then a charge of grenadiers,  
 And then a flight of drum-beat cheers.

## X.

So drum and doctrine rudely blent,  
 The casements rattled strange accord,  
 No mortal knew what either meant,  
 'Twas double-drag and Holy Word,  
 Thus saith the drum and thus the Lord.  
 The Captain raised so wild a rout  
 He drummed the congregation out !

## XI.

The people gathered round amazed,  
 The soldier bared his head and spoke,  
 And every sentence burned and blazed  
 As trenchant as a sabre-stroke:  
 " 'Tis time to pick the flint to-day,

To sling the knapsack and away—  
The Green of Lexington is red  
With British red-coats, brothers' blood !  
In rightful cause the earliest dead  
Are always best beloved of God.  
Mark time ! Now let the march begin !  
All bound for Boston fall right in !”

## XII.

Then *rub-a-dub* the drum jarred on,  
The throbbing roll of battle beat !  
“ Fall in, my men ! ” and one by one,  
They rhymed the tune with heart and feet  
And so they made a Sabbath march  
To glory 'neath the elm-tree arch.

## XIII.

The Continental line unwound  
Along the church-yard's breathless sod,  
And holier grew the hallowed ground  
Where Virtue slept and Valor trod,  
Two hundred strong that April day  
They rallied out and marched away.

## XIV.

Brigaded there at Bunker Hill  
Their names are writ on Glory's page,  
The brave old Captain's Sunday drill  
Has drummed its way across the Age.

## THE BATTLE OF ORISKANY.

## GENERAL HERKIMER.

FORT Stanwix guns are dumb. No longer Death  
Grins from embrasures blackened with their breath.  
Appear, once more, immortal August day,  
Let muskets rattle, busy batteries play —  
Ye rifles blent with old Queen's arms fire true !  
Fire low! fire fast! fire all! till woods turn blue  
With bullet blasts, and the green mosses red  
With such bad blood as Brants and Butlers shed —  
See there, St. Leger's scalp-locked scarlet hordes,  
Satanic bond of tomahawks and swords,  
Scalps at their belts — such peltry quoted high,  
A woman's hair ten dollars if she die! —  
Gunpowder in their rum! — Sling off the drum!  
Beat the long roll with cannon! Let them come!  
Run up the flag above the parapet!  
Those Stanwix colors strangest that had yet  
Saluted, shrouded, rallied, or defied,  
Grew costlier far than coronation pride:  
A soldier's shirt all scalloped into stars  
Was stitched -- "fixed" stars — upon a martial cloak  
Of blue, and stripes of scarlet rags made Mars  
Blush dingy red and bless the battle smoke.  
Up with the garments! Valor's cast-off clothes  
Can have no ending more sublime than those!  
A sultry day, Oriskany, was thine,  
Of wild red revelry and wasted wine  
In shivering woods the waltz of death began,  
From tree to tree the dreadful circles ran,  
'Twas white to red, 'twas death to man or man.

Death lurked behind each beech and maple shaft,  
Heroic soldiers took to woodman's craft,  
The bullets whistled thick as driving rain,  
The bayonets bristled like a hedge of cane,  
The forest columns dotted dense with shot  
Like bird's-eye maple when the wood is wrought.

Amid this hell rode Herkimer, as calm  
As if he heard an old Hollandic psalm —  
Rode his "White Surry" with a swinging rein,  
As if he loitered in a farm-yard lane;  
Then tumbling headlong died the stricken steed,  
Then fell the rider like a shattered reed;  
They bore him bleeding to a fallen beech,  
But sword and soul were both within his reach,  
And there reclined he fought the battle through  
With orders cool, as if he never knew  
That, every breath he drew, around him whirled  
An instant summons to the other world.  
And there he sat, and struck with arrow-head and knife  
A spark; the tinder crinkled into life,  
And then he calmly smoked as if he heard  
The storks come home, old Holland's household bird!

---

#### THE CAVALRY CHARGE.

HARK! the rattling roll of the musketeers,  
And the ruffled drums and the rallying cheers,  
And the rifles burn with a keen desire  
Like the crackling whips of a hemlock fire,  
And the singing shot and the shrieking shell  
And the splintered fire of the shattered hell,

And the great white breaths of the cannon smoke  
As the growling guns by batteries spoke;  
And the ragged gaps in the walls of blue  
Where the iron surge rolled heavily through,  
That the Colonel builds with a breath again  
As he cleaves the din with his "Close up, men!"  
And the groan torn out from the blacken'd lips,  
And the prayer doled slow with the crimson drips,  
And the beaming look in the dying eye  
As under the cloud the Stars go by.  
"But his soul marched on," the Captain said,  
For the Boy in Blue can never be dead.

---

And the troopers sit in their saddles all  
Like statues carved in an ancient hall,  
And they watch the whirl from their breathless ranks,  
And their spurs are close to the horses' flanks,  
And the fingers work of the sabre hand —  
Oh, to bid them live, and to make them grand !  
And the bugle sounds to the charge at last,  
And away they plunge and the front is passed !  
And the jackets blue grow red as they ride,  
And the scabbards too, that clank by their side,  
And the dead soldiers deaden the strokes iron-shod  
As they gallop right on o'er the plashy red sod —  
Right into the cloud all spectral and dim,  
Right up to the guns black-throated and grim,  
Right down on the hedges bordered with steel,  
Right through the dense columns, then "right about  
wheel !"

Hurrah ! A new swath through the harvest again !  
Hurrah for the Flag ! To the battle, Amen !

### THE HERO OF NEW HAMBURG.

ON the night of February 6th, 1871, an oil train was wrecked on the track near the bridge at New Hamburg, on the Hudson River Railroad. The Express train bound West ran into the wreck, the bridge took fire and fell, and twenty-one persons in the Buffalo sleeping car were killed. The Engineer, E. H. Simmons, remained upon his engine, doing what he could to avert the threatened disaster, and failing in this, looked death in the face, chose it to desperation, and perished at his post.

### THE HERO OF NEW HAMBURG.

THE grandest charge of cavalry  
That ever was seen or sung  
The solitary trooper made  
Who spoke in the Latin tongue.  
Bring out your Roman rider  
Who carried the Gulf by storm,  
And the dumb earth closed forever  
And shrouded his vanished form;  
Sowed like the seed that has fallen,  
'Mid the multitude's acclaim,  
How it blossomed through the ages  
Till it ripened into fame!

I can match your daring rider,  
Tell the Roman not to wait!  
There's another hard behind him  
Drawing rein at Glory's gate!  
Comes the deathless Engineer,  
Clears the ages at a leap,  
Crowds the flock of years together  
As a shepherd folds his sheep—

Right across historic pages  
With a clatter and a clank,  
Craunches time to scintillations,  
Closes up the broken rank,  
Smites the Roman in the flank !

Nevermore shall mighty boatswain  
Pipe all hands with panting fire;  
Sweep thy soul, oh lion-hearted,  
As Apollo swept the lyre!  
Loose thy grasp, immortal Brakeman !  
Flinging free the iron rein,  
Earth ! be taught articulation,  
Learn by heart the dread refrain,  
Jar and thunder back again !  
Dare ye quench Elijah's chariot,  
Lightning touch and Titan tread ?  
Abandon every wheel and axle,  
Furl forever, flags of red !  
Halt him not with battle lantern,  
Show a light as white as day !  
Let him pass, O signal stations,  
His for aye "the right of way !"

Flanked by rugged rock and river,  
Death and double side by side —  
Hand upon the mighty bridle,  
See the gallant horseman ride;  
See the ponderous creature coming,  
Sway and swing along the track,  
Brave postilion in the saddle,  
Flying chambers at his back —  
Chambers bright with hope and dreaming,

Chambers dark with terror dire—  
Chambers? Altars for a demon's  
Dreadful sacrifice of fire!

On it comes, the sinewed being,  
With its rider grand and calm,  
Watch and heart keep steady beating  
Like the pulsing of a psalm!  
Stolen out of Eastern story,  
Garbed in brass, this Arab's dream  
Plunges through the tunneled thunder,  
Cambric needle through a seam;  
Flickering dimly in the distance,  
Flaring broadly into sight  
With his dawn of human making,  
Break of day in heart of night!  
Grumbling in the lairs of mountains,  
Roaring down the valley broad,  
Rounding out a sturdy headland,  
Blazing like a Grecian god!

Now this rider strangely changes—  
Touch him with a wizard's wand,  
He shall seem a wondrous gunner  
With the lanyard in his hand:  
Taking sight across the kingdoms,  
Cloud by day, by night a flame  
He trains his winged artillery,  
At a target taking aim,  
Sure to watch if not to pray,  
Drift December, blossom May,  
At a target night and day,  
Full a thousand miles away  
Taking aim!

Columned smokes built high and mighty  
Colonnade the dome of night;  
Kindles like a face the dial  
With the bursts of furnace light,  
And the rider at his window,  
Watching with a pleasant smile,  
Sees the friendly world to meet him  
Coming down the track the while,  
Sixty seconds make a mile!

Halt him on your rounds, ye Angels,  
Swinging wide the lights of God !  
Watchman, flash afar the signal,  
“Death is waiting down the road !”  
Halt him with your dropping lanterns,  
Shed like stars from ripened sky —  
Halt him, glances red and lurid,  
Glaring like an angry eye!  
All run down the clocks of danger,  
Dials with the sunshine passed !  
Come the keen shrill cry and challenge,  
Death and Duty meet at last !  
Now transfigured stands the rider,  
Flinging down his rude disguise,  
Sturdy hand upon the bridle,  
Telling how a hero dies.  
“Hold her hard,” he bade the brakeman,  
Clutched the monster by the throat  
Till the bell with sudden clangor  
Tolled as if the sexton smote,  
And the grand rebellious creature  
Plunged into the empty air,  
Swung him out to resurrection

Clad in Fame's immortal wear!  
Born alive to song and story  
    Comes this Engineer again,  
Comes this man to plead for honor  
    As the gage of kingly men;  
Pleading that the grace of dying  
    Is the rarest grace of all;  
That the earth's sublimest heroes  
    Never heard a bugle call;  
That the clock of Christ's own ages  
    Never yet had sounded "one,"  
If this planet's grandest jewel  
    Had been nothing but a crown !

To his steed they lashed Mazeppa,  
    Smithfield clanked with martyrs' chains,  
But this man, bound round with honor,  
    Gathering up the iron reins,  
Free as Chimborazo's eagle  
    Flaps his pinion over head,  
Charged forlorn at utter danger  
    As if Death itself were dead !  
Halt him not with battle lantern,  
    Show a light as white as day !  
Let him pass, O signal stations,  
    His for aye "the right of way !"

**"DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP."**

MAY 30TH, 1776. MAY 30TH, 1876.

ONE hundred years ago this blessed day  
The schooner Franklin grounded on a bar,  
And British boats swarmed down upon the prey  
As thick as bees where clover blossoms are.  
She was a fighting schooner, and the sky  
Was clouded up with battle near and far,  
And like a flame the crimson flag did fly—  
She had her choice to strike it or to die.  
They took the hapless schooner fore and aft,  
With whips of living fire they lashed the craft,  
'Twas raining iron and 'twas lightening steel,  
And cannon thundered through the heavy weather,  
'Twas crash and flash—'twas shout and whirl and wheel,  
And spattered fire and muskets' rattling peal,  
And cheers and curses went aloft together.  
Redder than sunset was the Franklin's deck,  
And many a sea-dog lay a shattered wreck.  
They brought the ship about until she wore  
Nearer hell's port than she had sailed before.

The schooner's Captain bore an unknown name  
That never had been heard in song or story,  
And yet the gallant Wingford's heart of flame  
Should light a ballad of Centennial glory.  
One hundred years ago this day he died,  
One hundred years ago this day he cried  
Amid the throe and tempest of despair,  
"The flag, my men, we'll keep it floating there!"  
Splashed like a wine-press, wounded, sore-beset,

Swath after swath he cut right through the throng,  
On every royal jacket that he met

He slashed a scarlet chevron good and strong;  
He cleared a place to die with swinging stroke,  
His cutlass clanged upon the slippery oak,  
He fell, and gave one upward lightning glance  
That shone an instant like the flash of lance,  
For there aloft the fiery flag yet swung  
And lapped the murky cloud, a crimson tongue—  
He rallied up his soul and voice and cried  
“Oh, don’t give up the ship !” and so he died  
If that *be* dying, and the sailors heard  
And took the Captain at his latest word.

Great Heart, good-night ! Death made thee commodore,  
And yet no orders for an hundred years !  
Why name this man a century ashore ?

I’ll tell you why. They could have spared their tears  
Who mourned him dead. He is not dead at all,  
He was not made to smother in a pall.  
Men are alive who might have heard him speak  
Amid the thunders of the Chesapeake  
Those very accents, “Don’t give up the ship !”  
That rang again from Lawrence’ dying lip.

By some new name here, there and everywhere,  
The soul of courage breathes the living air.  
One noble deed may bless the race, and when,  
As myriads now asleep, men die for men  
And Liberty and God, the deed inspires  
And kindles and exults like prairie fires,  
Until horizon to horizon broad,  
It makes day’s camp-fire in an utter night

And doubles noon-time to intenser light.  
It wilts the flowers indeed and glooms the sod,  
But one sweet May will end the sad eclipse  
And flowers will worship with their scarlet lips  
    And lilies pray and make all right with God.  
And so our vast encampments of the Blue  
    May have their marching orders any day,  
And pass the world again in grand review,  
    Defend the right and hold the wrong at bay —  
May haunt with valor some poor halting heart  
Till seeming clods to instant manhood start,  
Cast off, as lightnings flash, their long disguise  
And stand transfigured to our earnest eyes.

---

*BUNKER HILL.*

TO the wail of the fife and the snarl of the drum  
Those Hedgers and Ditchers of Bunker Hill come,  
Down out of the battle with rumble and roll,  
Straight across the two ages, right into the soul,  
And bringing for captive the Day that they won  
With a deed that like Joshua halted the sun.  
Like bells in their towers tolled the guns from the town,  
Beat that low earthen bulwark so sullen and brown,  
As if Titans last night had plowed the one bout  
And abandoned the field for a Yankee redoubt;  
But for token of life that the parapet gave  
They might as well play on Miles Standish's grave !  
Then up the green hill rolled the red of the Georges  
And down the green vale rolled the grime of the forges —  
Ten rods from the ridges hung the live surge,  
Not a murmur to meet it broke over the verge,

But the click of flint-locks in the furrows along,  
And the chirp of a sparrow just singing her song.  
In the flash of an eye, as the dead shall be raised,  
The dull bastion kindled, the parapet blazed,  
And the musketry cracked, glowing hotter and higher,  
Like a forest of hemlock, its lashes of fire.  
And redder the scarlet and riven the ranks,  
And Putnam's guns hung, with a roar on the flanks.  
Now the battle grows dumb and the grenadiers wheel,  
'Tis the crash of clubbed musket, the thrust of cold steel,  
At bay all the way, while the guns held their breath,  
Foot to foot, eye to eye, with each other and Death.  
Call the roll, Sergeant Time ! Match the day if you can:  
Waterloo was for Britons — Bunker Hill is for man !

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#### GENERAL JAMES B. STEEDMAN AT CHICK- AMAUGA.

A H, God ! but we were nigh undone  
That Sunday in September,  
When quenched in powder smoke the sun  
Died like a hickory ember.

I see the gleam of yellow sands,  
The dark green cedars' shining cones,  
The oaks that spread their tattered hands  
And stand like spectres in their bones.

The long and crooked front of blue,  
Like some grand coast-line stretched afar,  
Heroic headlands valor-true  
All blossomed out with flag and star;

And here and there the living line,  
Bent inward like a dreadful bay,  
Where, dense as cane-brakes muskets shine,  
And death at anchor silent lay  
And waited for the surges gray.

Then Longstreet's men came rolling in  
High tides of battle, and the grum  
And black-mouthing batteries begin  
To roar, the welkin thunders dumb.

Then rose and fell as if they swung  
Upon the sea, the rolling drums  
And wailing fifes, and bullets sung  
Like busy bees when summer comes.

The kennelled cannon roused from sleep,  
Roared out until their heavy breath  
Like fleeces of gigantic sheep  
Lay all along the line of death.

The blue sea-wall was battered down,  
The gallant headlands washed away,  
Except upon one sandy crown  
Where sturdy Thomas held the day.

His stubborn flags had taken root  
Within that tawny earth below,  
And many a tongue grew gladly mute  
To make those standards grow !

Day of intrepid souls unsung,  
That gleams across historic page  
Red as a harvest-moon, among  
The dismal Sundays of the age !

Knee-deep in death the boys in blue  
    Stood fast, Gibraltar to the seas,  
And sleety fire and iron flew  
    And colors riddled in the breeze.

Time took that day two hours for noon,  
    Never so late was four o'clock,  
Never so slow the Western sun,  
    Never so fierce the battle shock.

Then Steedman with the hope forlorn  
    Came riding in as cavaliers  
Old May-days came with bugle-horn  
    To crown some village queen with cheers.

The flowers he wore were immortelles,  
    The songs were made of cannon breath,  
Around him whirled with shrieking shells  
    In gusty swarms the bees of death.

The bayonets glitter in the light,  
    The belts grow white, the flags expand  
Like flowers that blossom in the night,—  
    On comes the Corps of Cumberland !

So wild and high the fierce assault,  
    So red the blue, so rent the ranks,  
The column made a breathless halt --  
    As if the world were at his flanks.

The general kept right on, and when  
    He saw the dizzy column lag,  
He wheeled upon the wavering men,  
    Charged like a foe upon the flag

And grasped it — “ Boys, you may go back ! ”

His voice rang out, then right about

Faced the gray lions in the track,

“ The flag will go my way without

“ You, boys ! ” The words electric flashed

Heroic deeds along the line,

And hearts were thick while on they dashed

As cones upon a Norway pine.

And now this grand militia-man,

By birth a regular and chief,

Supine and pale has led the van

As silent as a fallen leaf.

Oh, flags that wilted as if frost

Had smote you ere the winter came,—

Oh, fifes that wailed a hero lost,

Oh, bugles warbling sweet his fame !

Oh, heart that led the hope forlorn,

Good-night, my General, and good-morn !

## DESCRIPTIVE POEMS.

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### THE NEW YORK "NORTH WOODS."

BORN in a wilderness that, I am glad to write, is a wilderness still, but with such clearings of loveliness and such elegancies of life as would never be sought in regions where a ride of ten miles will plunge you into forests, with the cry of panthers and the howl of wolves to wake you from your "beauty sleep"; or the leafless branches upon a lifted head in the edge of an opening to set your heart off in a gallop; or the broad tread of an oscillating bear to set the fallen leaves and limbs crackling like a hemlock fire. It is a region that has had tragedies and lovemakings and adventure. It has always been a realm to me of strange mystery, startling possibility and wonderful fascination. I love its tangled trails, its tough climbs, its mighty recesses, its Druidical rocks and its endless march of woods toward Horicon and Champlain. It is not a desert because unsown, but a wilderness because everything grows and lives and does "at its own sweet will." Ah, a rare place to knit "care's ravelled sleeve," fight mosquitoes, catch fish and live a life of busy idleness.

It was in that Wonderland I first saw the weazened old printing-press. It would have done poor Richard's heart good to ink it and work it and then order raisins and water for dinner. It is more than a century since Dr. Franklin stood up with a glass of Sparkling Delaware — water in his hand and drank "Success to printing." It was the twin of that wilderness monster the convivial spirit was toasting.

Now take the great quadruple cylinder, the mingled brains of a thousand men, that springs to the work with arms of flashing steel,

that snows down sheets like flakes in Northern winter, that strikes across the continents and shines like electric light from the East even unto the West. This is what Dr. Franklin drank to without knowing it. A Century ago indeed ! It is a thousand years from press to Press.

## THE NORTH WOODS.

NEW YORK, what imperial acres are these  
Where great cities in camps shed the light of their lamps  
From Atlantic to Lake like a necklace of fire,  
Constellations of homes shining clearer and nigher  
As when star-lighted waters are stirred by the breeze.  
And to think, oh, Excelsior, five millions strong  
With thy five thousand presses all playing as one,  
And thy close-printed sheets flung abroad as great fleets  
Roll their clouds of white canvas and shadow the sun  
That locked in thy breast like a Dorian song,  
Is a shaggy old wilderness growling with lairs  
Where the catamounts wail, and big "majors" of  
bears  
With their plantigrade feet wipe the blackberries in,  
And the lace-sifted twilights of forest begin,  
And the quick antlers lift where the quick waters  
drift,  
And the speckled trout flash in the crystalline cold  
All sprinkled with carmine and dusted with gold —  
Ah, what fish but a trout could the Saviour have made  
His treasurer there when the tribute was paid ? —  
That this Dukedom of wilds could be hid in the heart  
Of New York and not feel the full throb of its mart ?  
  
In that wilderness selvedge, a villager's Rest  
Now empty and gone, by an orchard once stood,

Where the robins of old reared young robbers by  
brood,

And beyond it a house, and the charm of the place,  
And as guiltless of stairs as a ground-sparrow's nest :

A mossy-browed house that was eyed like a face,  
With a window each side its wide mouth of a door,  
And the print of a thumb and four fingers it bore  
On a panel or two, like a nobleman's crest;

Ah, as fine and as clear as a sun-lit vignette

Is the office whence came *The Black River Gazette*.  
And the editor, printer and pressman are dead,  
And the "devil" withal. I have seen their low bed

Where the Lombardies sweep the sky clear of a cloud.  
As in life the one jacket could button them round,  
And with one hat at once they all could be crowned,

So in death they were laid in one coffin and shroud.

I stood in that room when a roundabout boy,  
All my pockets a jumble with jews-harp and joy,  
With small nibbles of sugar and fish-hooks and strings,  
A new Barlow knife, alley marbles and "things,"  
But my heart gave a tumble and I gave a start,  
At the grim iron prince of the house of Black Art:  
At the Ethiop press with one elbow a-crook,  
And its rigid round arm and its sinister look,  
And its hand-organ crank and its fire-dogs of legs,  
And its rations of ink in a couple of kegs,  
And the eagle that caught its brass claws in the thing,  
And, made captive for life, could never take wing.  
Tallow candles stood round, lank, languid and limp,  
Too dim for an angel and too light for an imp;  
Maps of regions of darkness benighted the place  
But it shone through the past with an exquisite grace.

And the boy gazed about with a silent surprise  
For nothing was white but the whites of his eyes.  
And the arm of the printer was dingy and long,  
And the arm of the pressman was shaded and strong.  
How that press came to life if I only could tell,

But who ever drew up in the bucket the star  
That he saw as he leaned on the curb, in the well  
When the hour was high noon and the night was afar ?  
Give the roller a run and the play is begun:  
Up with frisket and tympan and on with the sheet,  
Down with frisket and tympan in regular beat,

Then a turn at the rounce and two pulls at the bar  
And the platen comes down on the face of the page  
With its lines in relief like the wrinkles of age;  
Then a whirl of the crank and a groan and a clank,  
And the words regimental in justified rank  
To a late resurrection reluctantly rise  
And stand before men in their eloquent guise.

Then the sturdy-legged desk where the Editor sat  
With his hand in his hair and his mail in his hat,  
And the inkstand beplumed as with ferns in a fen  
As if he raised geese from the slip — of the pen.  
But the toil and the moil were brightened and past  
For he made a man member of Congress at last,  
And honors were easy — the Member made *him*.  
And he said in his heart that dipped candles were dim,  
And he bought him a lamp, raised a "devil" to light it,  
And discovered a wrong and wrote leaders to right it.  
Oh, dear old Gazette, not good night but good morn,  
For I hear in the twang of thy carrier's horn  
The prelude to bugles right royally blown  
That proclaim for the Press an estate of its own.

How my heart playing Hebrew reads back to the time  
When Otsego's fair vale was a magical clime;  
Not that Cooper's creations are lingering there,  
But 'twas thence that my wonderful caravan came,  
Books of beasts and of birds in their covers of blue —  
All the rest of the pages were read through and  
through —

With the tiger in stripe and the leopard in star  
As if they had torn Freedom's banner in two,  
And the lion bewigged like a barrister's bar,  
And with H. and E. Phinney's own imprint of fame.  
All the s's are f's and the catch-words below  
To lend me a lift as I eagerly go,  
And glad as a bee in a meadow of clover  
I give them a glance, wet my thumb and turn over.  
More bliss blossomed out in those primers of old  
Than in volumes of vellum in crimson and gold.

That imp of a press grew gigantic and grand  
And startled the world as Atlantic the strand,  
And I stood with bare brow by that triumph of art  
When the breath was turned on and the iron-clad heart  
Of the ponderous press was beginning to beat  
With the regular tramp of a troop in the street,  
With the bending of springs and the flutter of wings,  
And swinging of lever and swaying of bar,  
And the running of cylinders forward and back  
With a trundle of night for the letter-paved track,  
With a murmur of might and a rumble and jar  
And the playing of pinion and tumble of wheel  
And flutter of fingers and glitter of steel,  
To and fro, up and down, over, under and through,  
As steady and true the magnificent iron

As the beat of chronometer timing Orion.  
And I thought, with no press, without pulpit or post,  
    With no English, no engine, no lightning that ran  
The Celestial Express like a vanishing ghost,  
    That Methuselah died when a very young man.  
When the sound of the press on this wilderness broke,  
And the clock was just ready to give the first stroke,  
    Upon rudest of paper dead-ashen and gray  
The very first words that were marshalled in print  
Was "The Freeman's Own Oath." They were picking  
    the flint  
    Of young Liberty's firelock before it was day!  
In this noontide, the shadows rolled up at our feet,  
    And the paper dawned white as a field of fresh snow,  
And the clock striking "twelve," the old Oath we repeat  
    And we pass it along to the ages below.

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### THE OLD VILLAGE CHOIR.

I HAVE fancied sometimes the Bethel-bent beam  
    That trembled to earth in the Patriarch's dream,  
Was a ladder of song in that wilderness rest  
From the pillow of stone to the blue of the Blest,  
And the angels descending to dwell with us here,  
"Old Hundred" and "Corinth" and "China" and  
    "Mear."

All the hearts are not dead nor under the sod  
That those breaths can blow open to Heaven and God.  
Ah, "Silver Street" flows by a bright shining road,—  
Oh, not to the hymns that in harmony flowed,  
But the sweet human psalms of the old-fashioned choir,  
To the girl that sang alto, the girl that sang air.

"Let us sing to God's praise!" the minister said:

All the psalm-books at once fluttered open at "York,"  
Sunned their long dotted wings in the words that he  
read,

While the leader leaped into the tune just ahead,

And politely picked up the key-note with a fork,  
And the vicious old viol went growling along  
At the heels of the girls in the rear of the song.

Oh, I need not a wing; — bid no genii come  
With a wonderful web from Arabian loom,  
To bear me again up the river of Time,  
When the world was in rhythm and life was its rhyme,  
And the stream of the years flowed so noiseless and  
narrow

That across it there floated the song of a sparrow;  
For a sprig of green caraway carries me there,  
To the old village church and the old village choir,  
Where clear of the floor my feet slowly swung  
And timed the sweet pulse of the praise that they sung,  
Till the glory aslant from the afternoon sun  
Seemed the rafters of gold in God's temple begun !

You may smile at the nasals of old Deacon Brown  
Who followed by scent till he ran the tune down,  
And dear sister Green, with more goodness than grace,  
Rose and fell on the tunes as she stood in her place,  
And where "Coronation" exultantly flows,  
Tried to reach the high notes on the tips of her toes !  
To the land of the leal they have gone with their song,  
Where the choir and the chorus together belong.  
Oh ! be lifted, ye gates ! Let me hear them again,  
Blessèd song ! Blessèd Singers ! forever Amen.

**THE OVERLAND TRAIN TO CALIFORNIA.**

I.

FROM Hell Gate to Gold Gate  
And the Sabbath unbroken,  
A sweep continental  
And the Saxon yet spoken !  
By seas with no tears in them,  
Fresh and sweet as Spring rains,  
By seas with no fears in them,  
God's garmented plains,  
Where deserts lie down in the prairie's broad calms,  
Where lake links to lake like the music of psalms.

II.

Meeting rivers bound East  
Like the shadows at night,  
Chasing rivers bound West  
Like the break-of-day light,  
Crossing rivers bound South  
From dead winter to June,  
From the marble-old snows  
To perennial noon —  
Cosmopolitan rivers, Mississippi, Missouri,  
That travel the planet like Jordan through Jewry.

III.

Through the kingdoms of corn,  
Through the empires of grain,  
Through dominions of forest  
Drives the thundering train —  
Through fields where God's cattle  
Are turned out to grass

And His poultry whirl up  
From the wheels as we pass;  
Through level horizons as still as the moon,  
With the rills fast asleep and the winds in a swoon.

## IV.

There's a thrill in the air  
Like the tingle of wine,  
Like a bugle-blown blast  
Where the scimitars shine  
And the sky-line is broken  
By the mountains divine —  
Where the planet stands up  
Body-guard before God,  
And to cloud-land and glory  
Transfigures the sod;  
Ah, to see the grand forms'  
Magnificent lift  
In their sandals of daisies  
And turbans of drift;  
Ah, to see the dull globe brought sublime to its feet,  
When in mantles of blue the two monarchies meet,  
The azure of grace bending low in its place,  
And this world glancing back with a colorless face.  
Who marvels Mount Sinai was the State House of God ?  
Who wonders the Sermon down old Galilee flowed ?  
That the Father and Son each hallowed a height  
Where the lightnings were red and the roses were white !  
Oh, Mountains that lift us to the realm of the Throne,  
A Sabbath-day's journey without leaving our own,  
All day ye have cumbered and beclouded the West,  
Low glooming, high looming, like a storm at its best,  
By distance struck speechless and the thunder at rest.

v.

All day and all night  
It is rattle and clank,  
All night and all day  
Smiting space in the flank,  
And no token those clouds  
Will ever break rank.  
Still the engines' bright arms  
Are bared to the shoulder  
In the long level pull  
Till the mountains grow bolder.  
Ah ! we strike the up grade !  
We are climbing the world !  
And it rallies the soul  
Like volcanoes unfurled,  
Where it looks like the cloud that led Moses of old,  
And the pillar of fire born and wove in one fold  
From the womb and the loom of abysses untold.

vi.

We strike the Great Desert  
With its wilderness howl,  
With its cactus and sage,  
With its serpent and owl,  
And its pools of dead water,  
Its torpid old streams,  
The corpse of an earth  
And the nightmare of dreams ;  
And the dim rusty trails  
Of the old Forty-nine,  
That they wore as they went  
To the mountain and mine,  
With graves for their milestones ;

How slowly they crept  
 Like the shade on a dial  
 Where the sun never slept,  
 But unwinking, unblinking, from his quiver of ire  
 Like a desolate besom the wilderness swept  
 With his arrows of fire.

## VII.

Now we pull up the globe? It is grander than flying,  
 'Mid glimpses of wonder that are grander than dying,  
 Through the gloomy arcades shedding winter and drift,  
 By the bastions and towers of omnipotent lift,  
 Through tunnels of thunder with a long sullen roar,  
 Night ever at home and grim Death at the door,  
 We swing round a headland,  
 Ah, the track is not there!  
 It has melted away  
 Like a rainbow in air!

Man the brakes! Hold her hard! We are leaving the world!

Red flag and red lantern unlighted and furled.  
 Lo, the earth has gone down like the set of the sun—  
 Broad rivers unravelled turn to rills as they run—  
 Great monarchs of forests dwindle feeble and old—  
 Wide fields flock together like the lambs in a fold—  
 Yon head-stone a snow-flake lost out of the sky  
 That lingered behind when some winter went by!

Ah, we creep round a ledge  
 On the world's very edge,  
 On a shelf of the rock  
 Where an eagle might nest,  
 And the heart's double knock  
 Dies away in the breast—

We have rounded Cape Horn! Grand Pacific, good morn!

VIII.

Now the world slopes away to the afternoon sun —  
Steady one! Steady all! The down grade has begun.  
Let the engines take breath, they have nothing to do,  
For the law that swings worlds will whirl the train through.

Streams of fire from the wheels,  
Like flashes from fountains;  
And the dizzy train reels  
As it swoops down the mountains;  
And fiercer and faster  
As if demons drove tandem  
Engines "Death" and "Disaster"!

From Winter to Spring in one wonderful hour —  
Nevada's white wing to Creation in flower —  
December at morning tossing wild in its might —  
A June without warning and blown roses at night!  
Above us are snow-drifts a hundred years old,  
Behind us the placers with their pockets of gold,  
And mountains of bullion that would whiten a noon,  
That would silver the face of the harvester's moon;  
Around us are vineyards with their jewels and gems,  
Living trinkets of wine blushing warm on the stems,  
And the leaves all afire  
With the purple of Tyre.

Beyond us are oceans of ripple and gold,  
Where the bread cast abroad rolls a myriad fold —  
Seas of grain and of answer to the prayer of mankind,  
And the orange in blossom makes a bride of the wind,  
And the almond tree shines like a Scripture in bloom,

And the bees are abroad with their blunder and boom —  
 Never blunder amiss, for there's *something* to kiss  
 Where the flowers out-of-doors can smile in all weather,  
 And bud, blossom, and fruit grace the gardens together.  
 Thereaway to the South, without fences and bars,  
 Flocks freckle the plains like the thick of the stars ;  
 Hereaway to the North, a magnificent wild,  
 With dimples of caftions, as if Universe smiled.

Ah ! valleys of Vision,  
 Delectable Mountains  
 As grand as old Bunyan's,  
 And opals of fountains,  
 And garnets of landscapes,  
 And sapphires of skies,  
 Where through agates of clouds  
 Shine the diamond eyes.

## IX.

We die out of Winter in the flash of an eye,  
 Into Eden of earth, into Heaven of sky ;  
 Sacramento's fair vale with its parlors of God,  
 Where the souls of the flowers rise and drift all abroad,  
 As if resurrection were all the year round,  
 And the writing of Christ sprang alive from the ground,  
 When he said to the woman those words that will last  
 When the globe has grown human with the dead it  
 holds fast.

Live oaks in their orchards, rare exotics run wild,  
 No orphan among them, each Nature's own child.  
 Oh, wonderful land where the turbulent sand  
 Will burst into bloom at the touch of a hand,  
 And a desert baptized  
 Prove an Eden disguised

X.

There's a breath from Japan  
    Of an ocean-born air,  
Like the blue-water smell  
    In an Argonaut's hair.  
'Tis a carol of joy  
    With a sweep wild and free;  
And the mountains deploy  
    Round the Queen of the West,  
Where she sits by the sea —  
By the Occident sea —  
    In her Orient vest,  
All the earth at her knee,  
And the heart of all nations  
    Alive in her breast —  
Where she sits by the Gate  
    With its lintels of rock,  
        And the key in the lock —  
By the Lord's Golden Gate,  
    With its crystal-floored chamber  
        And its threshold of amber,  
        Where encamped like a king,  
        The broad world on the wing,  
Her grand will can await.  
Where now are the dunes,  
The tawny half-moons  
    Of the sands ever drifting,  
    Of the sands ever sifting,  
    By the shore and the sweep  
    Of the sea in its sleep?  
Where now are the tents,  
With their stains and their rents,

All landward and seaward  
Like white butterflies blown?  
All drifted to leeward,  
All scattered and gone.  
And this uttermost post  
Of earth's end is the throne  
Of the Queen of the Coast,  
Who has loosened her robe  
And girdled the globe —  
With her radiant zone —  
The throb of her pulses  
Has fevered the Age —  
She has silvered and gilded  
All history's page?  
She has spoken mankind,  
And has uttered her ships  
Like the eloquent words  
From most eloquent lips —  
They have flown all abroad  
Like the angels of God!  
Sails fleck the world's waters  
All bound for the Gate,  
All their bows to the Bay  
Like the finger of fate.  
Child of the wilderness  
By Deserts confined,  
Wide waters before her,  
Wild mountains behind,  
She unlocks her treasures,  
To the gaze of mankind.

Her name is translated into each human tongue,  
Her fame round the sweep of the planet is sung,

And she thinks round its curve  
By the telegraph nerve.

XI.

When the leaf of the mulberry is spun into thread,  
Then the spinner is shrouded and the weaver is dead;  
And that shroud is unwound by the fingers of girls,  
And the films of pale gold clasp the spool as it whirls,  
As it ripens and rounds  
Like some exquisite fruit  
In the tropical bounds,  
In air sweet as a lute,  
Till the shroud and the tomb  
Dyed in rainbow and bloom,  
Glisten forth from the loom  
Into garments of pride,  
Into robes for a bride,  
Into lace-woven air  
That an angel might wear.  
Ah, marvellous space  
'Twixt the leaf and the lace,  
From the mulberry worm  
To the magical grace  
Of the fabric and form !  
Oh, Imperial State,  
Splendid empire in leaf,  
That grows grand on the way  
To the sky and the day,  
Like the coralline reef  
To be royally great.  
Dead gold is barbaric, but its threads can be woven  
Into harmonies fine, like the tones of Beethoven,  
Can be ravelled and wrought

Into love-knots of faith  
 For the daughters of Ruth—  
 Into garments of thought,  
 Into paintings for truth—  
 And be turned from the wraith  
 Of a misty ideal  
 That may vanish in night,  
 To things royal and real  
 That shall live out the light.  
 So the true golden days  
 Shall be kindled at last,  
 And this realm shall rule on  
 When the twilights are gone,  
 In the grandeur of truth  
 And the beauty of youth  
 Till long ages have passed.

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### THE BARK "TRUE LOVE."

THE bark "True Love" arrived in the Delaware in November last, direct from Greenland, with a cargo of cryolite—both cargo and craft queer as an old ballad. She had been in commission one hundred and six years, and, like the "old ship Zion," her timbers were all sound. With her tulip-shaped hull and her cumbersome bulwarks she seemed to have sailed out of another age into our own.

#### I.

WITH tack and turn in the idle air  
 What craft comes beating up the Bay,  
 Comes courtesying up the Delaware ?  
 Ahoy, Three-master ! whence away ?  
 Like millers' wings, her canvas gray

Is opened wide in ghastly palms  
To feel for wind among the calms.

## II.

Her sides are curved like the splendid flower  
That sets on fire the tulip tree,  
Between her teeth the trusty bower  
They planted last in nameless sea,—  
Ah, Hope takes root where'er it be!—  
Plucked up a thousand times with song,  
Swung like a charm, and borne along !

## III.

I hear the flap of the languid sail,  
The drowsy creak of swaying yard—  
I see the bunting's lazy trail,  
A figure mount the battered guard—  
The breeze is purring like a pard.  
“How are ye named, O gray and quaint !  
“From monarch dead, or faded saint ?”

## IV.

Then came the word from the master's mate,  
Then bounded back a trumpet gust  
Of salt-sea air articulate  
In tones that grated rough with rust:  
“From no dead king or saintly dust—  
“The bark ‘True Love’ from Labrador,  
“Whose sun is cold as Kohinor !”

## V.

Where stars show through like the points of spears  
And cling and shine in wounded night,  
Impale a thousand frozen years

And halt the ages dead and white —  
 Where Arctic's ghostly anthracite,  
 The icebergs' crash before the breeze,  
 Unmelted, alabaster seas !

## VI.

"The bark 'True Love' left Cape Farewell  
 "With cryolite from Greenland's coast"—  
 "What's cryolite?" He strove to tell,  
 But on she swept — the words were lost ;  
 The waves' white plumage glanced and tossed,  
 So bore away this Arctic dove  
 From Cape Farewell to "Brotherly Love."

## VII.

Think of her sailing down the age  
 Across the line, and sailing yet !  
 The ink has faded from the page  
 Whereon her score of captains set  
 Two thousand names old salts forgot —  
 Not one of all who worked the ship  
 Now lingers on a human lip.

## VIII.

And here she is with her timbers sound,  
 Stout-hearted oak, all through and through,  
 As when the columns graced the ground  
 Where acorns fell and giants grew !  
 O boatswain shrill ! pipe up the crew,  
 And bid some breezy ballad blow  
 They sang an hundred years ago !

## IX.

Some Chevy Chase with its endless line  
 That runs along the slender tune,

As runs the bright Madeira vine  
 And wreathes the thirty days of June,—  
 Or love-lorn maidens and the moon,—  
 Or Spanish Main, or Blackbeard rhyme  
 Of ocean's Paradise of crime.

## X.

Aye, tumble up from the watch below,  
 Ye square-built sea-dogs tough and true,  
 That sailed the young "Love" long ago !  
 In trousers broad and jackets blue,  
 Tarpaulins brave with streamers new,  
 With waistband hitch, and backward scrape,  
 And forelock touch, they round the Cape  
 And take the Horn ! Can spectres speak ?  
 They shift the cargo in the cheek !

## XI.

The sailor's knot at each rugged throat  
 As bare and brown as signal gun,  
 The rolling gait they learned afloat,—  
 Ah, old True Lovers every one !  
 Good night ! Turn in ! The watch is done !  
 Sleep till the sea its dead gives up,  
 As bubbles rise in beaded cup.

## XII.

Behold her now ! the gallant craft,—  
 Between her teeth the bone-white foam,  
 She shows old ocean's rabble raft  
 Of tumbling billows' roll and comb,  
 Her heels at last, and scurries home !  
 From Northern Crown to Southern Cross,  
 From eider-duck to albatross !

## xiii.

To some broad Bay with its breathless glass  
 Think that you see her sailing in —  
 All things in pairs that thither pass,  
 The clouds are twos — she and her twin :  
 In such a place to sigh were sin;  
 'Twould mar the perfect marriage there,  
 'Twixt this in sea and that in air.

## xiv.

When days in pairs with their mingled light  
 Of silver dawn and golden set,  
 Strike through each thin, transparent night,  
 As if God's pearls and rubies met  
 And kindled on a coronet,  
 How could she sail from Paradise  
 For Cape Farewell and Arctic ice ?  
 From Greenland to the Delaware  
 God speed the "True Love" everywhere !

## xv.

Almost two thousand Christian years.  
 And every year of all the host,  
 An older, grander craft appears  
 And sails along the Planet's coast  
 As silent as a passing ghost;  
 Silent, except one Song they sing  
 On board the flag-ship of the King.

## xvi.

Upon its bow is a swinging star,  
 Its sails are like some evening clouds  
 With here and there a silver spar;  
 Its deck is thronged with angel crowds,

Like threads of mist its filmy shrouds,  
Its masts are made of beams of moon,  
Its lettered flags of golden noon.  
Star in the East ! Behold the name  
Emblazoned on the streamer's flame !

XVII.

It plies the glorious Strait between  
Cape Christmas Eve and Paradise;  
Untravelled angels have been seen  
Across that Strait and in the skies  
By children's clear and naked eyes !  
It is their only yearly line  
Between the earth and shores divine.

XVIII.

That Song of theirs — will it ever wane,  
Or flow like Life's eternal river ?  
"Good will to men," its sweet refrain,  
Is set to the key "Forever."  
Ah, narrow Strait two worlds to sever !  
The Port of Peace and Perfect Day  
Are just across the azure way ;—  
Whoever strikes his earthly tent,  
We will not wonder that he went,  
We will not say that he has died,  
But only gone the other side.

## TORNADO SUNDAY.

THE memorable tornado that swept over Iowa, destroying the village of Camanche and leaving across the State a broad track of death and desolation. A meeting for the relief of the sufferers was held in Chicago, and the poem was written for the occasion.

THE winds sweetly sung  
In the elms as they swung,  
And the woods were in time and the robins in tune;  
One cloud just forgiven,  
Lay at anchor in heaven,  
And Iowa asleep on the threshold of June !

All the air a great calm,  
And the prairie a palm,  
For the Lord when He blest, left the print of His hand;  
All the roses in blow,  
All the rivers a-glow,  
Thus the Sabbath came down on the bud-laden land.

On the bride and the bold,  
On the clay and the gold,  
On the furrow unfinish'd, on fame to be won,  
On the turbulent tide,  
On the river's green side  
Where the flocks of white villages lay in the sun.

All the world was in rhyme—  
Bid good morning to Time !  
Oh, sweet bells and sweet words of the dear golden Then !  
It is fair all abroad  
From blue sky to green sod !  
Let us pray while we can: blessed Sabbath, Amen !

Not a murmur in air,  
 Nor lament anywhere,  
 And no footfall of God on the ledges of cloud;  
 'Twas a breath, and it fled —  
 Song and Sabbath were dead,  
 And the threads of gold sunshine the woof of the shroud.

Oh, words never spoken,  
 Oh, heart and hearth broken,  
 Oh, beautiful paths such as loving feet wear !  
 All erased from the land,  
 Like a name in the sand —  
 As the thistle-down drifts on a billow of air !

Like the sighing of leaves  
 When the winter wind grieves,  
 Like the rattle of chariots driving afar,  
 Like the wailing of woods,  
 Like the rushing of floods,  
 Like the clang of huge hammers a-forging a star !

Like a shriek of despair  
 In the shivering air,  
 Like the rustle of banners with tempest abroad,  
 Like a soul out of Heaven,  
 Like a tomb trumpet-riven,  
 Like a syllable droppe'd from the thunder of God !

Then these to their weeping,  
 And those to their sleeping,  
 And the blue wing of Heaven was over them all !  
 Oh "sweet south" that singeth,  
 Oh, flower girl that bringeth  
 The gushes of fragrance to hovel and hall !

Oh, blue-bird, shed Spring  
With the flash of thy wing,  
Where December drifts cold in the bosom of June—  
Set our hearts to the words,  
Dear as songs of first birds:  
We are Brothers at night that were strangers at noon !

---

#### FOURTH OF JULY AT "THE CORNERS."

THE mightiest birthday but one in all time  
Has thundered wide open its portals of prime,  
And the Lord showed his orient banners sublime.  
  
By land and by sky there were signs of its coming,  
Flower trumpets were blowing and partridges drumming,  
The bee-hives were busy swarming and humming.  
  
A cloud dropped one thunder for Day and for Deed,  
A bird in red epaulettes swung from a reed,  
And the blue-flags drew sword in marshland and mead.  
  
Great billows of flags unreefed and unsurled,  
Great billows of thunder all pounding the world,  
Great surges of sound artillery-hurled,  
  
That crash through horizons as if they were shells  
Of robins and sparrows, and resonant fells  
Redouble the blare of the bugles and bells.  
  
The big cannon whelm with Columbiad booms,  
The rumble and snarl of the petulant drums,  
And the fifer's shrill crying a whisper becomes.

The powder-cloud thunder, the tramp and the tread,  
The rattle of muskets, the dead-line of red,  
Are echoes of battles grassed over and dead.

Thank God for the echoes haunting mountains and  
crags,

Unshotted the guns and unshrouded the flags  
Till Time beats tattoo and the weary world lags.

All wild at "the Corners"! The store has burst out  
With blazes of bunting that saucily flout  
The sweet girlish figures that flutter about,

And the desolate spar that swung in the blast,  
And saluted no June with a leaf as she passed,  
To the breath of the nation has blossomed at last

In the red, white, and blue of the Liberty Pole!  
Knee-deep out of breeches, a boy blows a coal  
With pucker of lip and elation of soul;

Around him red fringes of fire from Cathay,  
Within him the throb of young life's reveille,  
Beneath him the Land and above him the Day,

Beside him a sword, red with strawberry blood,  
He forged from a fragment of light pine wood,  
And a paper chapeau of the Bonaparte mode.

All the sledge-hammers lie on the blacksmith's floor.  
The anvil stands out in the road at the door,  
The bellows' long nose has forgotten to snore;

The cindery forge is ashen and sere,  
An apron, the hue of an elephant's ear,  
Hangs limp from the broad antlered horns of a deer.

The blacksmith turns gunner, the anvil a gun,  
To roar its hoarse welcome till daylight is done,  
As if all the brave blows were welded in one

Its master delivered with free sweep and swing,  
Coming down good and strong with reduplicate ring,  
That made the young Vulcan of hammers the king.

So "the Corners" were whirled in a maelstrom of noise,  
Of patriot pride and ribbed gingerbread joys,  
The daughters all girls and the sons were all boys.

Give a great flight of cheers the freedom of sky  
That the tri-colored eyries of eagles yet fly,  
God save in its splendor the Fourth of July !

---

#### "ATLANTIC."

THE steamship "Atlantic" struck a rock on the morning of April 1, 1873, and was wrecked, with a fearful sacrifice of human life. The ship was out of her course, and if any reason existed for the fatal variation, it was the fear that the supply of coal was insufficient to take it into its destined port. The incident of the saving of the lad, John Hanley, awakened universal interest and sympathy.

---

Av, build her long and narrow and deep !  
She shall cut the sea with a scimitar's sweep,  
Whatever betides and whoever may weep !

Bring out the red wine ! Lift the glass to the lip !  
With a roar of great guns, and a "Hip ! hip !"  
"Hurrah !" for the craft, we will christen the ship !

Dash a draught on the bow ? Ah, the spar of white wood  
Drips into the sea till it colors the flood  
With the very own double and symbol of blood !

Now out with the name of the monarch gigantic  
That shall queen it so grandly when surges are frantic !  
Child of fire and of iron, God save the "Atlantic" !

All freighted with power below and above !  
The heart of a fiend and the wing of a dove —  
Tumble in the brave cargo of life and of love !

Good for a thousand souls ! Hustle them in !  
Your mother and mine shall the census begin ;  
Then tell off the children too little to sin !

With furnace of fire and forest of mast,  
She can conquer the calm and rally the blast ;  
But fuel is costly ! Coal-heavers avast !

Ah, those ebony heaps that cumber the hold  
Can never be reckoned in silver and gold —  
Ten lives to the ton, and an anguish untold !

Alas for the lack of a handful of coals ;  
Alas for the ship that is haunted with souls ;  
Alas for the bell that eternally tolls !

All aboard, my fine fellows ! " Up anchor !" the word —  
Ah, never again shall that order be heard,  
For two worlds will be mourning ye gone to a third !

To the trumpet of March wild gallops the sea ;  
The white-crested troopers are under the lee —  
Old World and New World and Soul-World are three.

Great garments of rain wrap the desolate night;  
Sweet Heaven disastered is lost to the sight;  
"Atlantic," crash on in the pride of thy might !  
With thy look-out's dim cry, "One o'clock, and all  
right!"

Ho, down with the hatches ! The seas come aboard !  
All together they come, like a passionate word,  
Like pirates that put every soul to the sword !

Their black flag all abroad makes murky the air,  
But the ship parts the night as a maiden her hair—  
Through and through the thick gloom, from land here  
to land there,

Like the shuttle that weaves for a mourner to wear !

Good night, proud "Atlantic !" One tick of the clock,  
And a staggering craunch and a shivering shock —  
'Tis the flint and the steel ! 'Tis the ship and the rock !

Deathless sparks are struck out from the bosoms of girls,  
From the stout heart of manhood in scintillant whirls,  
Like the stars of the Flag when the banner unfurls !

What hundreds went up unto God in their sleep !

What hundreds in agony baffled the deep —  
Nobody to pray and nobody to weep !

Alas for the flag of the single "White Star,"  
With light pale and cold as the woman's hands are  
Who, froze in the shrouds, flashed her jewels afar,  
Lost her hold on the world, and then clutched at a spar !

God of mercy and grace ! How the bubbles come up  
With souls from the revel, who stayed not to sup;  
Death drank the last toast, and then shattered the cup !

Who crushed these poor hearts that wild terror environ?—

Atlantic of water? "Atlantic" of iron?

The den where they bearded the granite old lion?

The God of the sparrows? A breath from Mount Zion?

Bring the World into court! Bid the verdict be given!

"To this true word we render, resistlessly driven,

"And so say we all—Not Guilty 'fore Heaven!"

Poor handful of carbon! Call humanity's roll

For the fellow who thought, "Ah, how costly is coal!"

He loses who bids *any* price for his soul!

And Christ died for this man—this pitiful creature!

Made like the noblest in fashion and feature—

Saint John the Belov'd and the Wilderness Preacher!

Too sordid for soul and too subtle for sod,

Let us lock out of heart the poor animate clod,

And leave the new Cain and his brother with God!

---

In the clash of the leaves of the frantic woods,

And the turbulent whirl of the angry floods,

And the rumble and roar of the cloudy broods,

In the height of the storm you have sometimes heard

The melodious voice of an unseen bird,

And so clear and so brave that your heart was stirred;

It seemed to be Faith set anew to a song,

That the weakest of things need never fear wrong

If they only believe in the true and the strong.

In that bitterer storm, when the plunge of the wreck  
Tossed the white forms at will that were strewing the  
deck,

As the foam flakes are tossed on a war-horse's neck,

And men growing grim in their hunger for life,  
And husband in frenzy abandoning wife  
To struggle alone in the desperate strife,

Then a voice brave and young rose sweet through the  
din:

"Lend a hand! I'm alone with a lifetime to win!"  
'Twas the song of an angel rebuking the sin.

Then the brute that's in man slunk back to its lair—  
Strong fingers were wound in the boy's curly hair—  
"Pass the lad right along! My chance he shall share!"

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### THE FLYING HERALDS.

I CAN see him now—the post-rider of my boyhood—in his muskrat cap, and his overcoat with half as many capes as North America; his thin section of a horse that trotted on one leg and cantered with the other three. I can hear his tin horn, like the buzz of an unamiable bee, as he summoned the people out to gate or bars for the damp dry Weekly poor Desdemona could cover with her handkerchief.

Afterward, I rode on the Fast White Mail that whirled a hundred tons of print and pen a thousand miles a day, and halted the sun that it should not go down until the morning paper of New York had been read in "the land of the Beautiful River." All the

whips and spurs of Derby Day were as the lazy click of a grandam's needles slow knitting by the kitchen fire, to that wild rattling ride, and when the miles grew short and shorter still, it was like a flight of ringing cheers. Swiftest motion is intensest life.

## THE FLYING HERALDS.

SLING up the bugle ! Harp and lute,  
Let every dusty string be mute,  
Be still the drum and dumb the flute,  
While trumpets blow so brave and loud  
They rally like a flag unfurled  
And wake and warm the startled world —  
The trumpet of the " Flying Cloud."  
That silver breath of steam adrift  
As lazy as a morning mist,  
Can whirl an engine winged and swift  
As whirls a fan's small ounce of lift  
At the turn of my lady's wrist;  
Can stitch this planet's ravelled robe,  
Gird like a slender girl the globe  
Till far-off cities meet and mate  
As neighbors gossip at the gate,  
Lo, there the Eagle Chariots come !  
The gorges growl, the bridges drum,  
The tunnelled thunder rumbles grum  
And starry sparkles raining fast,  
As if, God's autumn come at last,  
I saw adrift and tempest-rent  
A tatter of the firmament.

## “FIFTY MINUTES LATE.”

Pull out, my gallant engineer !  
Take aim along the smooth air line,

The way is clear, the far is near,  
Five hundred miles and then we dine.  
Upon Chicago draw a bead —  
See where she lifts her antlered head,  
Her masted fleets like woods of pine.  
With clash and clank and roar and ring  
And clang of bell and trumpet blare  
And comet head-light's growing glare  
Old Vulcan's self has taken wing !  
With rattling rock and swinging swerves  
He fearless sweeps the splendid curves,  
Lies over to the nervous work  
As wheel the chargers of the Turk.  
The engineer whips out his watch —  
The train is fifty minutes late !  
“ Old Time's a nimble thing to catch,”  
He says, “ but then I'm sure as fate,  
“ Shove in the diamonds there, my mate ! ”  
The mile-posts glitter like a grate.  
The red-mouth'd furnace yawns for more  
And gives a husky, hungry roar,  
It shakes a thunder-cloud of mane  
Above the quiver of the train,  
Down comes the lever quick and strong,  
The Eagle Chariots plunge along.  
'Tis whip and spur and rail and steel,  
'Tis flash and rush and rock and reel  
As if one streak of early dawn  
Should travel night-time and be gone.  
See all the while the driver stand,  
His heart-beat in his bridle hand  
His hair by gusty night blown back —

It blows whene'er *he* has the track;  
His eye is on the iron bars  
That swing apart to let him through,  
He hums a tune and thanks his stars  
    "The Lansing's" staunch and tried and true.  
His brow is wet with mental sweat,  
He says, "I'm sure to make it yet—  
My grand old lady does her best."  
His soul is in the distant West,  
His watch is burning in his vest.  
Its bloodless hands that mock the dead  
    Wipe off the minutes from its face  
As if the tears that Time had shed  
    For some lost hope or perished grace.  
What if a paltry breath of space  
Would save that "foot-board" hero there  
    His well-earned knighthood of the road,  
Those hands would never heed the prayer  
    But mark the fatal hour he owed.

The frantic bell is on the ring,  
The furnace door is on the swing,  
The Fast White Mail is on the wing.  
It whistles up the stealthy roads  
    That creep across the iron way.  
It brightens up the still abodes  
    Of them that weep or sleep or pray.  
The mighty eye glares down the rails,  
The cruel wheels come down like flails,  
The bull-dog bridges growl and growl  
    Forever at the Herald's heel,  
The mile-posts all are cheek by jowl  
    And sixty in an hour !

It means far more than steam and steel,  
This wondrous burst of pinion power,  
Means tempered grit and iron will,  
Means nerve and faith and brain and skill.

"TWENTY MINUTES LATE."

The twain at last have struck their gait—

The engine and the engineer.

"The train is twenty minutes late!"

The smutty fireman gives a cheer,  
He lets her out in giant strides,  
She thrusts her slender arms of steel  
Deep in the caskets at her sides,  
The nervous creature seems to feel  
For something precious hidden there;  
Plucks out great handfuls of the power  
That gives her sixty miles an hour,  
And flings and tosses everywhere  
Huge volumes of the power asleep,  
As if a thousand fleecy sheep  
Turned out to pasture in the air.

"She buckles bully to the work,  
She's not the kind of girl to shirk,"  
The driver says, and tries the gauge  
And never dreams he leads the age.  
Full seventy feet at a single plunge,  
And seventy feet at a single breath,  
And seventy feet from instant death!  
A little slower than the lunge  
The lightning makes that stabs the night,  
And faster than a falcon's flight.  
'Tis seventy feet at every beat

Of heart and clock the train is hurled,  
At such a rate with such a mate  
Not eighteen days around the world.

"ON TIME!"

The hamlets scatter from the path,  
As tempests blow the aftermath,  
And wild as deer the woods retreat  
That met and whispered in the street.  
"Down brakes! A haystack blocks the route!"  
And there! It slowly waltzes out.  
A mighty shadow inks the track  
As if a mountain should lie down  
And leave the print from foot to crown—  
Before you think it there and back  
We cut the shadow through and through,  
The telegraphic poles grow dense  
As forests of the tall bamboo,  
That swift striped streak is just a fence  
As if ten miles of ribbon flew.  
'Tis neck and neck. The driver smiles,  
He's running down the missing miles.  
The train swims on with easy sway  
As supple as a serpent's glide,  
Chicago and the break of day,  
And miles and minutes side by side!  
White lights and red, green lights and blue,  
The thorough-breds have pulled us through—  
Through snow and blow and ray and rack,  
A thousand miles! One night and day!  
From black to white, from white to black.  
"My move," I hear the driver say,

"Checkmate to Time ! We've won the game,  
The race for life, the flight for fame—  
Chicago ! and we kept the track."

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### KELLY'S FERRY.

THE flowers of battle are not always crimson. Some of them are white as snow. During the late war, Kelly's Ferry, on the Tennessee, was a scene of mingled men, mud, profanity and mules, and as desolate as Hogarth's "End of All Things"; but no fairer flower ever blossomed anywhere than when the Third Ohio Blues fed the fainting Fifty-fourth Virginia Grays, captured at the storming of Mission Ridge. The flower is called Fraternity, and they had brought it all the way from Georgia, where those same Grays were hosts, those very Blues the famished guests, and set it out beside the lazy Tennessee. It was the writer's fortune to see one of the grandest battles of all the war, when "Greek met Greek" in a gallantry so splendid that it lights up that far November day as with the glory of an Easter sun; but never anything so fine as that.

Those two banquets make a pair of pictures never to be turned to the wall. And the flower, Fraternity, that, drenched with costly blood, yet lived — let it be transplanted from Kelly's Ferry far and near, till it blossoms in all weathers and beautifies the whole land.

### KELLY'S FERRY.

#### I.

HAVE you read in any book, heard anybody tell  
Of the gallant Third Ohio, Lieutenant-Colonel Bell,  
So like in shaggy ruggedness a mountain full of lairs  
That when they cheered, you never knew the Buckeyes  
from the bears ?

Ah ! they loved the River Danger as Satan loves to sin,  
Just drew their belts another hole, and then they waded  
in —

Waist-deep, chin-deep, the fellows went, nor drew a  
doubting breath,  
No halting for an order nor touch of hat to Death !  
“Go in !” and “Third Ohio !” their battle-cry and  
faith.

## II.

Their talk was rough as bowlders are, and when they  
named the Flag  
They christened it “Old Glory” or just “That blessed  
rag;”  
Somebody fell — “passed in his checks” was all they  
had to say;  
“God’s country” was the happy land of “boiled shirts”  
every day;  
They told of “wooden overcoats,” and rude board cof-  
fins meant,  
And thought they were a snugger fit than any Sibley  
tent;  
But count the ragged blouses up, be sure the tale is true,  
Each hides a handful of a heart beneath the tattered  
blue  
That always played the Forward, March ! and never  
beat tattoo.

## III.

One Derby day they rode a raid and never drew the  
rein;  
They rode as if they never meant to ride that route  
again.  
Like long, clean sweep of trenchant blade where bonny  
flags burned blue,  
And not a rift in all the field to let a star-beam through

Down came a mantle broad and deep as comes the dusk  
of night,  
In folds of gray and butternut, and swept them out of  
sight,  
And swept them from their saddle-bows, and set their  
faces South,  
And made a Daniel of the troop for Richmond's lion  
mouth,  
And shrivelled shut the bannered stars like daisies in a  
drouth.

## IV.

"But why not tell it as it was?" I hear a fellow shout,  
"Just make a finish of the thing, and say they bowled  
us out—  
One swallow, and the regiment was fairly gobbled up—  
Scooped by the blasted Johnny Rebs like water in a cup.  
They brushed us clean of cavalry, the infantry of  
clothes,  
And left the Third Ohio boys as naked as a nose."  
For heavy baggage only hearts, each haversack was lank,  
Nor flag nor fife to cheer along the dull, disastered rank;  
Ah! deader than the March in Saul a canteen's empty  
clank.

## V.

Along the road the weary miles lay quivering in the sun,  
While naked Noon, with brazen blows, did weld them  
into one,  
That naked feet must measure off before the work was  
done.  
The days and boys crept slowly on—'twas thirst and  
starve and tramp.

Until they tumbled, supperless, beside a Southern camp.  
The Fifty-fourth Virginians came, like long-flanked  
leopard cats,  
With dingy pipes of corn-cob in their shapeless, bat-  
tered hats,  
And, lean as stakes, they stood around and watched the  
novel sight  
Of colors struck and empty hands, and Yankees "fly-  
ing light."

## VI.

Not long they gazed, but bolted with an "Old Domin-  
ion" whoop,  
Promoted in a twinkling to a commissary troop !  
You heard the clink of coffee-mills, the merry bayonet  
stroke,  
The camp was turbaned like a Turk with wreaths of  
cedar smoke;  
Then came the clang of frying-pan, the kettle's tam-  
bourine,  
They routed out the lazy fires and tucked the "dodg-  
ers" in;  
The martyred bacon made complaint and clouds of in-  
cense rose —  
Oh ! sweeter than the censer's swing to gain a soul's  
repose,  
The Boys in Gray forgot that night the Boys in Blue  
were foes !

## VII.

So sped the night in brotherhood, and when the dawn-  
ing came,  
They tucked two figures in their hearts — two figures  
and a name —

And hand met hand in soldier grip, no word of courtly  
thanks,  
One said "Good-by, Virginia," and one, "Light out,  
you Yanks."  
Still war's wild weather ruled the year. November to  
July,  
Deep thunders in the Cumberlands and lightnings in  
the sky.  
The raiders were their own again, to Lookout back they  
came,  
They told the tale a thousand times, it ended all the  
same;  
The "Fifty-fourth Virginia" toast set hearts and  
cheeks a-flame,  
And cheers flew wild, like sparks of fire — two figures  
and a name !

## VIII.

The Hawk's Nest hatched great broods of blue; they  
chipped the butternut shell,  
And fluttered up the rugged Ridge against the gates of  
hell —  
How fierce and grand the flight and swoop let Chatta-  
nooga tell.  
Lo ! 'mid the captives whirling down, their faces to the  
North,  
All wrapped like kittens in a cloak, Virginia's Fifty-  
fourth !  
With bodies lean and faces long, they trailed in strag-  
gling rank,  
And clustered like bepollened bees upon the river bank.  
There, on the lazy Tennessee, the Third Ohio lay,  
From Kelly's poor old Ferry a rifle-shot away.

With winking camp-fires' dancing lights and dew-drops' beaded shine,  
The night-air mantled rich and red as old Madeira wine,  
Toned down the mellow picture, and made it half divine.  
The sturdy boys were "keeping house," amid the mountain glooms,  
And smoky cones of Sibley tents, like rainy nights' mushrooms,  
Had spread their gray umbrellas, with narrow streets between,  
And the flicker of a bayonet, the glitter of canteen  
As flitting spots of indigo pinked out the living green.

## IX.

A lounging Buckeye took a look, saw "Old Virginia" come,  
And broke the camp with lively feet, as drumsticks beat a drum.  
Before he struck the picket-line he emptied every tent,  
He never stayed for stock or stone, but shouted as he went—  
What golden bugles should have blown and made a "joyful noise":  
"The Fifty-fourth Virginia is at the Ferry, Boys!"  
Three minutes and the camp had swarmed: they bought the sutler out,  
And brought their treasures to the light, and strewed them round about,  
And nothing but a night surprise could raise so wild a rout.

## X.

The kettles filled with Araby upon their muskets swung;  
A bag of "hard-tack," tough as tiles, upon a shoulder  
hung;

A slab of bacon, broad and brown, as if it came from mill,  
And so the laden caravan went filing down the hill.

The hosts were guests, the guests were hosts, and this  
alone was new,

The standard blazed with all its stars *above* the "bonny  
blue."

Oh ! sweeter than the censer's swing to gain a soul's  
repose,

The Boys in Blue forgot that night the Boys in Gray  
were foes !

## XI.

Arms won the game at Mission Ridge and played the  
hand alone;

At Kelly's Ferry hearts were trumps and *everybody* won.  
The drifting years, like thistledown, have glittered out  
of sight;

The boys are mustered out of life, let no man say  
"good-night !"

The Boys in Blue and Boys in Gray sleep peacefully  
together,

And God's own stars shine through the flag and make  
it pleasant weather.

At Kelly's Ferry once again let all the people meet,  
With blessings clustered round their hearts and blos-  
soms at their feet,

Give thanks the graves have ebbed at last that broke  
in billowed sod,

And make one grand Red-letter Day for manhood and  
for God.

## OLD-FASHIONED DECLAMATION.

*Teacher : "The Next Speaker."*

FORTH start the boys in buttons and their best,  
 All flushed and warm like sunset in the West.  
 Ah, dear old boys ! A Brutus every one !  
 The stage is cleared, the speaking is begun ;  
 The toes turned out and in and side by side  
 Like A and V, or boots in glossy pride  
 That wait their owner at a bedroom door.  
 Then come salutes — the boy that greets the floor,  
 The droop of Grecian bend, the jack-knife jerk,  
 The saucy nod, the salam of the Turk,

The well-sweep swing, the quaint *Italic* head  
 That in a cow would mean she meant to hook !  
 The ripening cheeks, the slow remembering look —

Ah, they return like visions from the dead.  
 One tells the world, "My bark is on the shore,"  
 One gives the story of the brave John Moore,  
 And wrings the while a button's slender neck,  
 Declares the hero there will "little reck"  
 If only he can sleep. "The burning deck !  
 The boy — oh, where was *he* ?" bursts madly on —  
 Both boys catch fire a minute and are gone ;  
 While fingers work along the trousers' seam,  
 'Tis "Scots who hae" and Byron's dreadful Dream,  
 "Foul fiend, avaunt !" and "Marmion, good-night."

The startled Turk cries out, "The Greek, the Greek,"  
 Bozzaris blazes in the fatal fight,

Then Poland falls and Freedom gives a shriek ;  
 The glorious Henry's "Liberty or Death"  
 Is blent with daggers and a small Macbeth,

The Grampian boy whose father fed those sheep,  
 The boy who said somebody "murdered sleep,"  
 And voices slender as a partridge covers  
 Pipe up about their "Romans" and their "Lovers."

## THE GIRLS' COMPOSITIONS.

Then came the crown and beauty of the day,  
 The girls in clusters, like a queen's bouquet.  
 Some cheeks were pallid, others red as wine,  
 The essays blossom white along the line;  
 They told of "Fate" and "Faith," of "Hope" and  
 "Truth,"  
 Of Beulah, Rechab, Rhadamanthus, Ruth,  
 Of "Life" and "Death," but true of every dove,  
 Write what she would, she never wrote of "Love."  
 Ring down the curtain ! Let the pageant pass !  
 A breath or two upon a looking-glass —  
 Ring down the curtain ! Then put out the light !  
 Oh, Girls and Boys, I greet you, and Good-Night !

---

## THE OLD MEETING-HOUSE.

**U**NFOLD the wardrobe in the cedar chest,  
 The weary week is done. The Sabbath rest  
 Begins to-night and lasts all day to-morrow.  
 Grant perfect peace without a dream of sorrow !  
 From Indian Summer to the ides of May  
 The house of God was one long winter's day,  
 With nothing warmer than an April smile  
 And small square foot-stoves tinkling up the aisle.  
 The Elder preached in mittens and in cloak;  
 While clouds of frosty breath around him broke,

He told of fire, but no one ever thought  
How blest indeed to have some embers brought.  
Celestial love and holy zeal alone  
Kept saints alive in that intemperate zone.  
These were the men that from their hemlock tents  
Defied the devil and the elements;  
And when their time for better homesteads came,  
Still nothing warmer than a candle's flame  
Relieved the rigor of the chambers, where  
The nail-heads silvered in the Arctic air.  
Sometimes the brazen warming-pan would sweep  
The linen parallelograms of sleep,  
Feel here and there the frosty corners out,  
But boys and girls went bouncing to their beds,  
Their cast-off garments flying all about  
Like wind-blown down from dandelion heads.

Gone the old church and gone the reverent feet  
That made the threshold beautiful and sweet,  
And charmed the Sunday noontimes round the place  
With Christian comfort, caraway and grace.  
Across the road the fallow field of God,  
Unsown, untilled, unmourned and overgrown  
With tangled thistle, thorn and golden rod;  
Gone are the graves and inarticulate the stone.

Gone is the preacher with the braided queue,  
The velvet small-clothes and the buckled shoe,  
The broad flapped coat, the Continental hat,  
The broad bandanna and the broad cravat —  
Broad as "the road" of which he used to read,  
"And thousands walk together there." Indeed  
He wore the colors of the Flag all through,

Bandanna gave the red defiant hue,  
Cravat the white, Connecticut — the blue !

Ah, dead lips whisper like a field of wheat,  
Old China mourns "departing friends" once more,  
Slow clouds the crape along the mourner's seat,  
Front-face to God and sadly borne before,  
The solemn bell slow booming overhead,  
In rigid slumber come the shrouded dead.

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### THE OLD CHOIR.

THE singing master's wooden pitch-pipe blew  
A curlew note and all the singers flew.  
Oh, fly again, sweet girls of Israel's choir,  
And warble larklike up the tuneful stair.  
The fugues fled with fragments of the words,  
The meeting house was filled with singing-birds  
Each with a note to make the nest complete,  
And named it Windham, Mear or Silver Street;  
Or else he "flushed" them with a two-tined fork,  
Picked up the key and grimly said, "Sing York!"  
Old Neptune's royal trident had not then  
Done baser duty for the sons of men,  
And two-tined forks "pitched" melody and meat,  
Tossed the new hay and swung the bundled wheat.

No girls in seraph white and heavenly blue  
So sweetly sang as if they thought it true,  
"I want to be an Angel." If they might  
Turn birds of Paradise and take their flight,  
Each pair of wings a maiden should unfurl

Would rob the world and not improve the girl.  
No gentle souls in penitential mood  
Before the congregation rose and stood,  
And sang confession, how "I love to steal,"  
No alto owned it with a joyous peal,  
No tenor told in music clear and strong,  
No grumbling bass to pass the crime along,  
No fair soprano bore the guilty story  
In sky-note carol to the gates of Glory.  
In those old days no line of real girls,  
Fun in their eyes and frolic in their curls,  
Stood forth and sang, "I would not live alway."  
Bless their dear hearts, we know they "care to stay."  
They sing it all with such delightful grace  
It brings a smile to Meditation's face;  
The three-score grief is not akin to youth's,  
The words are Rachel's, but the lips are Ruth's.

Grief to the world, those crumbling wasp-gray walls  
Were built too near the pure and perfect halls  
Of Paradise, the Canaan of the Blest.  
The pulpit stood, that sacred swallow's nest,  
On border land and boundary between  
That world and this, whence angels could be seen  
That beckoned mortals to the other side  
With grace so rare they could not be denied,  
No other gate but Death's, and so they died.

## AN OLD-TIME PICTURE.

LET us roll back the world on its axle of fire,  
Let us halt, if we can, just a breath or two nigher  
The sweet simple time when they halved every trouble,  
Ere pinks were carnations and roses all double !

We will watch for a roof with a slope down behind,  
Like a sun-bonnet blown partly off with the wind,  
Till the tresses of brown turn to gold one by one,  
As they shake out of shadow and shine in the sun —

For a chimney as broad and as deep as a bin  
With the ember-red maple leaves eddying in,  
That volcanic plumed up with its volumes of smoke  
That were crimson and gold when day brightened and  
broke; —

For a neighborly porch with the brow of a Greek  
That will make you as welcome as if it could speak,  
With a vine that runs up like a creature alive,  
And as brisk as a bee that is bound from the hive  
It goes rambling about with inquisitive leaves,  
And then swings in a frolic along the low eaves; —

For a rusty-gray curb, round a rugged stone well,  
Where with dangle of bucket the sweep rose and fell  
O'er the disc of still water, a silent black eye  
That unsleeping, unwinking, is watching the sky;  
Now a star shines along, drops a beam down below,  
Now a drift of noon cloud sheds a fleck of its snow,  
Now a shadowy face smiling up to the brink  
    'ere a girl smiling down has forgotten to drink; —

For the hives of a fashion quaint, classic, and old,  
Where the bees went and came with their burdens of  
gold—

'Twas an African village of straw-woven cones  
Within humming range of those myrtle-draped stones,  
Of two borders of pinks, Sweet Williams and thyme,  
That led out to the gate like a couplet in rhyme,—  
Of the paeony's glow and the prince's own feather—  
Of the four-o'clocks timing the dullest of weather,  
Of the meek little asters, Earth's studies for stars,  
And the love-lies-a-bleeding there close by the bars,—  
Of the languid white poppy the dream-angels keep,  
With its quaint-covered cup of the powder of sleep,  
And sunflower and hollyhock stately and tall,  
And the cluster of lilacs beside the gray wall,  
And the daffodils, columbines, roses, and all  
That were kindred of Eve's without sinning at all;—

For the flinty old fields where the vicious-edged hoe  
Always struck out a weed and a spark at a blow;—  
For the pastures where mulleins and butter-cups grew,  
And the white-leggèd sheep gnawed the summer all  
through;—

For a fringe of deep woods with a sugar-camp in it,  
And the memories sweet as the song of a linnet;  
And the drum of the partridge can summon my soul,  
Like the drum of a drummer-boy beating the roll;  
Ah, the thought of the "red-bird's" small flicker of fire  
Can yet startle my pulses and kindle desire,—  
And the green, plashy place where the slim rushes grew,  
And the pendulum reeds, when the summer winds blew,  
Set the bird with an epaulette swaying and swinging  
Till the bobolink's bells fell to rocking and ringing !

Ah, the fire of the camp as it threaded the trees,  
And the smoke like a canopy swung by the breeze,  
And the young moons of April and young girls of old,  
How they flock to the heart like the lambs to the fold ;  
Ah, the dainty white flowers with their feet in the loam,  
And as clean as an angel a minute from home !—

For the strawberry meadow so haunted with bees,  
Where the boys and the girls crept about on their knees  
And became — of each other — devout devotees ;  
Wherè the monarchs of twilight for ages had stood  
And pronounced benediction with branches abroad,  
Hark, the stroke of an axe like the tick of a clock :

There's a burst of broad sunshine, a crushing of  
flowers ;

Hark, the crash of the giants with shiver and shock ;  
There's the chime of the wilderness striking the  
hours !

Lo, their monuments here that the mowers mow round  
With a glint of the scythes that are rasping the  
ground ;—

For the quilt of a field where the cradlers went in,  
And their free, swinging sweep seemed as easy as sin ;  
On the skeleton fingers the grain was laid down  
Like the Babes in the Wood, far away from the town,  
And the rakers and binders came rollicking after,  
With their heads thatched with straw and their hearts  
full of laughter —

And perhaps the old farmer of Pomfret is one,  
With a ring to his jokes like the flash of his gun ;  
And perhaps Molly Stark shades her eyes with her hand,  
As she watches the boys that are sweeping the land ;—

For a sky-line that rises and falls like the deep,  
Lies as light on the hills with its tremulous sweep  
As a mantle of blue on an infant asleep !

And the watch is all over — the picture is given,  
And the scene is ringed in with a scollop of Heaven.

The wide door on the latch opening full to the south  
Is as sweet as the smile of an eloquent mouth.  
When you swing on its hinges that neighborly door  
A broad carpet of sunshine unrolls on the floor,  
And a bee and a butterfly, freed from the fold —  
And they must have been in it before it was rolled —  
Like two figures escaped from a tapestry loom,  
Are just drifting about in the rambling old room.

There's a touch of green caraway charming the air,  
There's a low, loving ceiling, with a hook here and  
there,  
Whence festoons of dried apples and pumpkins have  
hung  
That the "bees" in checked aprons had quartered and  
strung ;  
There's a spotless white table, a broad open palm,  
That has grown with the mouths like the swell of a  
psalm —  
'Tis a small hand of Providence, laden and spread,  
That has answered the prayer of three ages for bread !  
There's a thrush on the linden, a goldfinch adrift,  
And a lark going up on a musical lift ;  
There's a girl in the garden, a "fellow" to love her,  
And a robin in song in the maple above her ;  
There's a tin horn in tether adorning the wall,

And its twang, sharp and nasal, is sweeter than all !  
There's a box on the window-sill, awkward and square,  
"Live-forever" defiant is clustering there:  
Ah, the *true* "live-forevers" are haunting the place,  
And are thronging my soul with ineffable grace.

Let us rummage the drawers and the desolate "till"  
For the snowy white cap, like a lily in frill,  
And the string of gold dew-drops that beaded a neck,  
And a bit of a dress in the blue and white check,  
And the scolloped vandyke that the grandmothers wore,  
And the short-gown and petticoat never seen more,  
And the green silk calash, like the top of a chaise,  
They could throw back at will in the dull, cloudy days  
And then lift it again when the sky was a-blaze;  
And the faded red "sampler," the work of Jane Ann,—  
You can see with your heart how the alphabet ran—  
And the year and *her* year: " '39,—*age eleven*,"  
And no older to-day, for she went young to Heaven !

The old room has grown human in all the long years—  
Has been brightened by happiness, hallowed by tears;  
By the brides on the hearth who will bless it no more,  
By the cradles kept rocking like boats on the shore.  
And that old-fashioned hearth with a flare to the jamb.  
And a throat full of midnight to swallow the flame,  
And a crane, like a witch's long slender black tongue,  
In the yawn of red fire horizontally swung;  
And a brace of tough fire-dogs, their feet in the coals,  
Looking out from beneath the broad volume that rolls  
Like the burst of a sunset in glory and gold,  
That the touch of no Titian could ever have told.

Ah, the Arctic old hearts are alive that remember  
All that splendor of fire in the perished December,  
And the flicker and flash of the musketry rattle  
When the hemlock and birch blazed away in sham  
battle,  
And the sturdier glow of the hickory bank,  
Reinforced with rock-maple in front and in flank,  
When the surges rolled up and the rubies dropped down  
Like the gems that are struck from a conquered king's  
crown,  
Till the rush-bottomed chairs falling back in good order,  
As the leaves flush apart in a wild rose's border,  
All around the horizon, the cider and song,  
And the Baldwins and Greenings went circling along,  
And the touching of hands and the whisper aside,  
All the charms that survived it when Paradise died !  
With the thought of that ingleside Eden is near,  
Long deserted and cozy old corners of cheer ! .

See the jambs worn away by the shovel and tongs,  
As the marble at Mecca was kissed by the throngs  
That just pressed their live lips to the lips of the stone  
'Till marble with mortal had blended and gone.  
Ah, those long iron fingers to handle the fire  
Were not made by the maker of Amphion's lyre,  
But the sturdy old smith at the forks of the road  
Smote them out of the bar as it sparkled and glowed:  
Ah, the print of his hammer is plainer to day  
Than his name that they graved on a tablet of gray !

There's the ghost of a clock, with its body all gone,  
Where it stood in a corner so ghastly and wan,  
With a pallor of face that so haunted the wall

You felt like enshrouding the shape in a pall.  
It was wound with a string, and its shadowy beat  
Fell a faint and deliberate vision of feet.  
How it marched through the night with an echoless  
tread,  
Like unshrived and unshodden impenitent dead !

On the mantel two candlesticks, iron and old,  
That have listed their glimmer long winters untold.  
Ah, the slender white shafts, with their finish of flame,  
That were lighted by those that old monuments name,  
And the snuffers served up on a salver of tin,  
When the crickets came out and the neighbors came in !

On the wall hangs the almanac, ledger of time,—  
At the tail of each page is a ringlet of rhyme,  
At the top is the sun, with a flare to his hair,  
And the moon, from the shield to the sickle, is there,  
And along the brief column's zodiacal blaze  
Is the roll of the age's battalion of days.  
On the stand lies the Bible, that Day-Book so broad  
It embodies the reckoning of mortals with God.  
When the last of fourteen — just the lines in a sonnet !—

Is first seated at table, a twenty-pound man,  
They just swing down the Book and enthrone him up-  
on it,  
And it brings him in range with the platter and pan.  
On its cover the razor is cautiously strapped,  
And within it the route of old Moses is mapped,  
With the noblest of Sermons and sweetest of Psalms,  
And the greenest of cedars and grandest of palms,  
While Saint Matthew and Malachi guard the old story  
Of the son that was born and the sire gone to glory —

Of the twain that were one, with an altar above it—  
Of the darling that died, with a willow to love it;  
'Tis the Blotter of tears for the mother and wife,  
And belongs to the Ledger and Day-Book of Life !

On the gnarled wooden hooks, over mantle and all,  
Is a battered Queen's Arm at a trail on the wall;  
And that filbert-brown gun Saratoga has heard;  
It has come to the shoulder at Washington's word —  
What was saucy to kings is as dumb as a sword !

In the blessed home-room, and that dreamy June day,  
On the hearth were two children together at play:  
One, a shrivelled gray man, shrunk away in his wear,  
One, a boy like a distaff, with tow for his hair;  
And one brought as he could the dead embers together,  
And one blew for his life like a blast of March weather.  
But the grizzled old boy was a-shiver in June,  
And his mate's puckered lips sadly lacking a tune.

He never heard the birds outside,  
He never felt the drifting tide  
Of song and fragrance mingled so,  
As strangely blent they float along,  
You think you *hear* the roses blow,  
And *smell* the robin's scented song.

Ah, the pulse that is dull with a dying desire  
Can be warmed never more by an old kitchen fire !  
But the shrivelled gray man dreamed his way back to  
life;  
In the howl of December he heard the wild strife,  
When the grand ragged regiments stood to the shock,  
And the troopers came down like the wave on the rock.

So all things around helped his dreaming along,  
And they rallied his heart like young Hopkinson's song.  
E'en a kettle of samp that was lazily swung  
On a hook's smutty finger, contentedly hung,  
With its bubbles of gold, as they shattered and broke,  
Made him think of the far-away musketry smoke,  
When the field was red-edged with the trooper's red  
drift,  
Like a border of cloud with a ray in the rift,  
And the Georges in surges of scarlet did run  
Like a line of shore billows pursued by the sun !  
And the lift of the lid at the touch of the steam  
Was as measured and slow as a drum in a dream !  
Of the boys on the hearth one was yet on his knees,  
When the calm ruffled up with a breath of a breeze,  
And a posy of girls blossomed into the room,  
All the threads of their talk like the woof in a loom.  
The old man looked round in a querulous way  
On the exquisite grouping, as if he should say,  
"Don't you s-e-e?—Here I am, in my ninetieth year!"  
And he hollowed his hand till it fitted his ear.  
"Oh, my grandfather dear," cried a willowy girl,—  
And a pair of forefingers nimbly ran up a curl—  
I was saying 'next week is the Fourth of July.'"  
Then the faded gray eye had a dawn like the sky,  
Then the drowsy old heart gave an audible knock,  
And he said, "I will pick the old flint in the lock—  
Ah, she never missed fire—there's a spark in her yet,  
And the rattling old talk she can never forget!"  
Then the poor bended figure grew stately and tall,  
For again he was hearing the bugler's old call;  
The one hand was uplifted, the other was laid

On the thistle-down head with whom he had played,  
And he murmured, " My boy, in whatever you do  
Be as right and as ready—the gun is for you—  
She's a quick-witted jade, but she's trusty and true."  
Then a hush like a ghost that is here without coming,  
Set the hearts of the maidens all halting and drumming,  
And the breeze held its breath that was filling the room.  
'Twas as if one had spoken direct from the tomb,  
With no charnel to rend and no coffin to rive,  
And the First Resurrection had found them alive !

And the day broke at last, with its bunting and thunder,  
And the eyes of the Thistle-down rounded with wonder;  
A big anvil was pounding away in the road,  
From the ridge of the barn a red banneret flowed;  
On the pine in the yard perched an eagle benighted,  
By a hand-breadth of stars in blue calico lighted.  
And the "trainers" went by in white legs and blue  
breasts,  
All their plumes tall and straight, and with blood on  
their crests,  
And the riflemen green, in their fringes and frocks,  
"Shutting pan" down the line like the ticking of clocks;  
And the troopers rode on in fierce coat and fur frown  
That had covered a bear, till it burdened them down.  
  
With the ruffle and roll of the double drum-corps,  
And the fifes warbling up in the rumble and roar,  
Like a bird half bewildered caught out in a storm,  
Lo, there stood on the threshold the shrunken gray  
form,  
With the battered Queen's Arm — ah, the darling old  
girl !

And then, just as the wind blew the flag out of furl,  
He was up with the musket and rattling away:  
It was three and three more for the Deed and the Day,  
And three rounds for the comrades that lay where they  
fell,

In the front of the battle, no tablet to tell ;  
And three guns for the Flag, and a toll for the dead  
Old Commander who rode in the tempest and said,  
“Blaze away there, my men ! Are you *saving* your lead ?”  
So the clock struck thirteen — ‘twas an old-time salute,  
And the smoke rolled away, and the musket was mute.

And the shadows were travelling eastwardly all,  
They were shed from the trees in a lengthening fall,  
They were reaching so lovingly over the land,  
And were waving so strange when the forests were  
fanned,

You would fancy them fingers of pitiful Night,  
That were gleaning the fields for a handful of light;  
And they lay like a hand on the Veteran’s head,  
And he sat in his chair till the heavens were red,  
And the musket and Thistle-down lay at his feet,  
And his years were in sheaf like a bundle of wheat;  
He had grounded his arms, and the Soldier was dead !  
Ah, the world never halted, but trampled right on —  
Not so much as a pansy for him that had gone,  
And the grasses grew rank and the tablet grew small  
Till the name on the stone had no meaning at all,  
And the Fourth of July yet revolved like the Light  
As it flashes to sea, intermitting the night.

There was growling of thunder low down in the sky.  
And the crown of calamity lifted on high,

Every thorn was crushed home upon Liberty's brow—  
Valley Forge's own imprint had bloodied its snow !  
Then the trumpet of rally ! The terrible tramp !  
The blue skies had all fallen ! The world was a camp !  
Then the columns spread wide like the limbs of a larch,  
And grew grander and broader. The world was a-  
march !

Then the crashing of cannon as batteries wheeled,  
And the shock of the legions ! The world was a-field !  
And the bullets flew fiercer and farther and faster  
In the storm equinoctial of dreadful disaster,  
Till the gardens of Eden were mantled in gloom  
And the world was a Ramah and Rachel at home !

And again it was June. The porch door was swung  
wide,  
And the sunshine rolled in with a wonderful tide  
Of the breath of the birds and the blossoms outside.  
Framed by threshold and lintel, a picture of grace,  
Stood a model of manhood, his heart in his face;  
And the fellow was made on an exquisite plan,  
With the eye of a woman, the mouth of a man;  
And his mother stood near in white apron and arm—  
And her silver-white hair did her beauty no harm—  
With a wide maple bowl where she patted and rolled  
With a broad wooden ladle an ingot of gold,  
And then lifted the ball to a platter of delf;  
It was Thistle-down's mother and Thistle-down's self !  
While her locks were turned white, his were deep'ning  
to brown—

Then she nervously said, "What's the news from the  
town ?"

"Oh, my mother," he cried, "there's a call for more men !

And they've made it before—I can't *hear* it again !  
And no more 'twould mean *me* had they called out my name !"

And his eyes were in tears, though his cheeks were aflame.

"Did they *lie* when they said that a man-child was born ?  
It could never be *me*, and I hid in the corn !—  
All the boys march by bugle, and I by that horn !" —  
And he turned back a thumb at the pitiful thing,  
Where it hung to the wall by its halter of string —  
"Oh, my mother, say 'yes,' " and he bent low above her,  
And he swallowed his heart like a pleading young lover;  
"Do you mind of that Fourth in old grandfather's time ?  
'T was the half of a couplet—I'll *finish* the rhyme."  
Then she lifted her face with a shiver of pain,  
For the surge from her heart had rolled back from her brain,  
And she said, "The Lord gave, and —" "Oh, no," he broke in,  
"Let the sentence be ended right where you begin.  
Oh, not 'taken away' but just *borrowed* awhile;" —  
And then murmuring low, with a far-away smile,  
"I'll come back in the blue, and we'll bless Him together,  
And we'll talk it all over,—this dark heavy weather.  
I will go—it is duty—the way the thing looks";  
And he took down the gun from the brown wooden  
hooks,  
And he said, "I will keep my old Grandfather's Fourth!" —  
And he blent with the blue of the broad azure North.

Then the June came again, and the bee and the bird,  
And the Thistle-down too, but he uttered no word,  
Though he came in the blue, as he said he would come,  
But with wailing of fife and the moaning of drum.

And the mother sat still in the sunny old porch,  
And her eyes had burned down like a perishing torch,  
But she took up the verse at the very same word:  
“And has taken away, and be blessedèd the Lord !”  
Do you think that the Fourth of July can go down  
While a Thistle-blow lives long enough to be brown ?  
It will yet be a child at an hundred years old !  
Lo ! the columns of Centuries grandly unfold !  
Rear rank, open order ! and front rank, about face ?  
And the Ages salute as they stand in their place,  
And the Day passes through with an eloquent grace !  
See it shine down the lines with unquenchable light —  
Good morn, Boy in Blue ! Continental, good night !

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#### **THE FARMER ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.**

THE farmer's cradlers rock the field of wheat,  
His mowers swing the scythe in naked feet,  
And sometimes blundering on a grassy nest  
They whirl a whisk and wish all bees “be — blest !”  
The green and golden surf around them rolls,  
They shed their jackets, but they keep their souls.  
Arrayed in tow the brawny threshers come  
And eat for three and drink New England rum ;  
The oaken floors their flails alternate beat,  
And kernels dance a rattling tune of sleet;  
Now comes the seamstress — bless her smiling face !

In tall back-comb and linsey gown and grace  
And not a bang — she long ago gave place  
To shapes of iron feet and cabinet-ware  
And left forlorn the bantam sewing-chair.  
Swung to a pillion on her wedding day,  
Her arm around his waist she rode away  
And made a log-heap turn a lover's nest —  
Of all the patents earliest and best.  
Great trees that kept the treaty made with Time  
An age ago — it seems almost a crime —  
Broke the long twilight as her husband knocked,  
And sweeping headlong down to ruin, mocked  
With crash of column, coronal and branch  
The frozen thunder of the avalanche.

They trained a sunflower near the cabin door,  
They walked on sunshine round the puncheon floor,  
Brigades of corn deployed in green parade  
And rounding gold among their ranks betrayed  
A pious war, a pumpkin cannonade.  
Old-fashioned flowers drew up in double line,  
The four-o'clock, the pink, the columbine.  
The flax a-field was hardly sown before  
Unhatched tow-heads danced upon the floor,  
Swarmed up the ladder on their way to bed,  
Swarmed down before the morning sky was red,  
Swarmed out three miles to meeting and to school,  
Set traps for wolves and learned the Golden Rule.  
No man could doubt the Children in the Shoe,  
Ten pewter spoons and still the number grew.  
And these are they who made this wilderness  
Turn fair enough for angels to caress,

Who set this heart of empire throbbing forth  
Its sterling manhood round the belted earth.

Their fires were half Promethean — came from Heaven,  
No sign of matches had King Pluto given,  
And yet how easy, had he only known,  
To dip his tooth-picks in the Acheron !

They covered embers, though no curfew tolled,  
They borrowed embers when their own were cold;  
They kept a box with flint and steel and punk,  
Boys had the grit and women had the spunk.  
Think of Oneida's maid, ye graceful girls to-day,  
Who cleared the door-yard of a bear at bay  
And swept him out with just an oaken broom.  
Salute, ye heroes, give the maiden room !

Think of the Whitestown Country girls that drove  
Their tandem teams where deer scarce dared to rove,  
Drove lumbering turn-outs of the classic breed  
Of dear Priscilla's puritanic steed,  
Whose Juno-eyes old Homer sang in Greece,  
And full of spirit with two horns apiece.

Five miles to meeting, forty miles to mill,  
They backed the grist and travelled with a will.  
By bridle path and trail and bark canoe  
Dim as the twilight, noiseless as the dew,  
Then back they came, the bright day turning brown,  
And met the swarthy Mohawk coming down.  
The forest roaring like the surf of seas,  
The starlight tangled in the tops of trees,  
Two fox-fire eyes betrayed the whiskered cat,  
A flying blot — Saint Crispin's bird, the bat,  
The tossing firefly's mockery of lamp,

And thought of home and Johnnycake and samp,  
 A royal breed of tramps the fathers made.  
 We knight them now with loving accolade !  
 Right-handed men whichever hand you shook,  
 Square-stepping men whatever way they took,  
 Stout-hearted men whatever might betide,  
 For duty ready till the day they died.  
 Truth-loving men, their lettered tablets bore  
     The first grave charge that ever mortal made,  
     "Here lies," the marbles say, but might have said,  
 "Here lies" the man who never lied before !

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### THE OLD KITCHEN.

**R**EVERSE the lever of the world to-day  
 And bid the flying Age dismount and walk;  
 Before the lightnings left their garret play  
     To cheer a kitchen and to learn to talk;  
     Before with slender shafts they pumped the rock  
 And flashed the torches on the startled air;  
 Before they fished for flame and found it where  
 The blundering Jonah found an oil depot —

Now light the candles with a glowing coal,  
 No other gleam like theirs in all the world to show  
     The "living room," the homestead's genial soul,  
 That warmed their hearts one hundred years ago;  
 The iron fire-dogs, crooked legs apart,  
 Knee-deep in rubies from the maple's heart,  
     of apples flushing by the fire,  
     boy that heaps the cord-wood higher,  
     of apples swing along the line,

The grumbling clock betrays the hour of nine,—  
Pass round, my girl, the orchard's amber wine!—  
A full-grown clock stands sentry over all  
Upon its solemn shape the firelights fall,  
A tall, slim coffin, whence, with face serene  
And sadly sallow, Time regards the scene  
Between his bloodless fingers, long and lean;  
With muffled pulse, a shrill and tolling bell,  
'Tis all the same, a bridal or a knell;  
A bellows' foxy nose, a turkey's wing,  
White cotton curtains on an apron string,  
The hammered tongs with poor magnetic legs  
A rusty scabbard swung from wooden pegs.  
The starving crane with Ethiopian arm  
Holds out its hooks with pot-and-kettle charm,  
Their nervous covers playing tambourine  
To serenade the golden samp within;  
The Prussian-blue pagoda-painted wares,  
The pewter platters and the kitchen chairs  
Whose woven seats once waved in summer airs  
Where rushes drew their sabres to salute,  
And bright Bob Lincolns swung with bell and flute;  
There dwelt of old, apart from pomp and pride,  
The living circles that have never died,  
But live as rainbows live, that fade away  
In broader glory and a brighter day.

## FORT DEARBORN, CHICAGO.

THE OLD—*October 8th, '71.* THE NEW—*October 8th, '73.*

BORN of the prairie and the wave—the blue sea and  
the green,

A city of the Occident, Chicago lay between;  
Dim trails upon the meadow, faint wakes upon the main,  
On either sea a schooner and a canvas-covered wain.

I saw a dot upon the map, and a house-fly's filmy wing—  
They said 't was Dearborn's picket-flag when Wilder-  
ness was king;

I heard the reed-bird's morning song—the Indian's  
awkward flail—

The rice tattoo in his rude canoe like a dash of April  
hail—

The beaded grasses' rustling bend—the swash of the  
lazy tide,

Where ships shake out the salted sails and navies  
grandly ride !

I heard the Block-house gates unbar, the column's sol-  
emn tread,

I saw the Tree of a single leaf its splendid foliage shed  
To wave awhile that August morn above the column's  
head;

I heard the moan of muffled drum, the woman's wail  
of fife,

The Dead March played for Dearborn's men just march-  
ing out of life,

The swooping of the savage cloud that burst upon the  
rank

And struck it with its thunderbolt in forehead and in  
flank,

The spatter of the musket-shot, the rifle's whistling  
rain—

The sand-hills drift round hope forlorn that never  
marched again !

I see in tasseled rank and file the regiments of corn,  
Their bending sabres, millions strong, salute the sum-  
mer morn;

The harvest-fields, as round and red as full-grown har-  
vest moon;

That fill the broad horizons up with mimic gold of  
noon;

I count a thousand villages like flocks in pastures grand,  
I hear the roar of caravans through all the blessed  
land —

Chicago grasps the ripened year and holds it in her  
hand !

"Give us this day our daily bread !" the planet's Chris-  
tian prayer;

Chicago with her open palm, makes answer everywhere !

I hear the march of multitudes who said the map was  
wrong —

They drew the net of Longitude and brought it right  
along,

And swung a great Meridian Line across the Found-  
ling's breast,

And the city of the Occident was neither East nor  
West !

Her charter is no dainty thing of parchment and of pen,  
But written on the prairie's page by full a million men;  
They use the plowshare and the spade, and endless  
furrows run,

Line after line the record grows, and yet is just begun;  
They rive the pines of Michigan and give them to the  
breeze —

The keel-drawn Charter's draft inscribes the necklace  
of the seas,

'Tis rudely sketched in anthracite, engraved on copper  
plate,

And traced across the Continent to Ophir's Golden  
Gate !

The Lord's Recording Angel holds the Charter in his  
hand —

He seals it on the sea, and he signs it on the land !

Unroll the royal Charter now ! It "marches" with the  
West,

Embossed along its far frontier, Sierra's silver crest;  
Along its hither border shines a sacred crystal chain:  
God cursed of old the weedy ground, but never cursed  
the main,

As free to-day from earthly sin as Eden's early rain !

"I found a Rome of common clay," Imperial Cæsar  
cried;

"I left a Rome of marble !" No other Rome beside !  
The ages wrote their autographs along the sculptured  
stone —

The golden eagles flew abroad — Augustan splendors  
shone —

They made a Roman of the world ! They trailed the  
classic robe,

And flung the Latin toga around the naked globe !

"I found Chicago wood and clay," a mightier Kaiser  
said,

Then flung upon the sleeping mart his royal robes of red,  
And temple, dome, and colonnade, and monument and  
spire,  
Put on the crimson livery of dreadful Kaiser Fire !  
The stately piles of polished stone were shattered into  
sand,  
And madly drove the dread simoom, and snowed them  
on the land !  
And rained them till the sea was red, and scorched the  
wings of prayer !  
Like thistle-down ten thousand homes went drifting  
through the air,  
And dumb Dismay walked hand in hand with frozen-  
eyed Despair !  
Chicago vanished in a cloud — the towers were storms  
of sleet,  
Lo ! ruins of a thousand years along the spectral street !  
The night burned out between the days ! The ashen  
hoar-frost fell,  
As if some demon set ajar the bolted gates of hell,  
And let the molten billows break the adamantine bars,  
And roll the smoke of torment up to smother out the  
stars !  
The low, dull growl of powder-blasts just dotted off  
the din,  
As if they tolled for perished clocks the time that *might*  
have been !  
The thunder of the fiery surf roared human accents  
dumb;  
The trumpet's clangor died away a wild bee's drowsy  
hum,  
And breakers beat the empty world that rumbled like  
a drum.

O cities of the Silent Land ! O Graceland and Rose-hill !  
No tombs without their tenantry ? The pale host sleeping still ?  
Your marble thresholds dawning red with holocaustal glare,  
As if the Waking Angel's foot were set upon the stair !  
But ah, the human multitudes that marched before the flame,  
As 'mid the Red Sea's wavy walls the ancient people came !  
Behind, the rattling chariots ! the Pharaoh of Fire !  
The rallying volley of the whips — the jarring of the tire !  
Looked round, and saw the homeless world as dismal as a pyre —  
Looked up, and saw God's blessed Blue a firmament so dire !  
As in the days of burning Troy, when Virgil's hero fled,  
So gray and trembling pilgrims found some younger feet instead,  
That bore them through the wilderness with bold elastic stride,  
And Ruth and Rachel, pale and brave, in silence walked beside ;  
Those Bible girls of Judah's day did make *that* day sublime —  
Leave life but *them*, no other loss can ever bankrupt Time !  
Men stood and saw their all caught up in chariots of flame —  
No mantle falling from the sky they ever thought to claim,

And empty-handed as the dead, they turned away and  
smiled,  
And bore a stranger's household gods and saved a stran-  
ger's child !  
What valor brightened into shape, like statues in a hall  
When on their dusky panoply the blazing torches fall,  
Stood bravely out and saw the world spread wings of  
fiery flight,  
And not a trinket of a star to crown disaster's night.  
"Who runs these lines of telegraph?" A clock-tick  
made reply:  
"The greatest of the three ' has brought this message  
from the sky,  
The Lord will send an Angel down to work these lines  
to-day !"  
Charge all the batteries good and strong ! Give God  
the right of way !  
And so the swift evangelists ran by telegraphic time,  
And brought the cheer of Christendom from every  
earthly clime;  
Celestial fire flashed round the globe, from Norway to  
Japan,  
Proclaimed the manhood of the race, the brotherhood  
of man !  
Then flashed a hundred engines' arms — then flew the  
lightning trains;  
They had that day the right of way — gave every steed  
the reins —  
The minutes came, the minutes went — the miles fled  
just the same —  
And flung along October night their starry flags of flame !  
They all were angels in disguise, from hamlet, field, and  
mart,

Chicago's fire had warmed the World that had her woe  
by heart.

"Who is my neighbor?" One and all: "We see her  
signal light,  
And She our *only* neighbor now, this wild October  
night!"

"I found Chicago wood and clay," the royal Kaiser  
cried,

And flung upon the sleeping mart the mantle in his  
pride;

It lay awhile—he lifted it, and there beneath the robe  
A city done in lithograph, the wonder of the globe;  
Where granite grain and marble heart, in strength and  
beauty wed,—

"I leave a mart of palaces," the haughty Kaiser said.

Now, thanks to God, this blessed day, to whom all  
thanks belong —

The clash of silver cymbals, the rhyme of the little  
song —

Whose Hand did hive the golden bees that swarm the  
azure dome,

Whence honey-dews forever fall around this earthly  
home —

Did constellate the prairie sod and light it up with  
flowers —

That hand defend from fire and flood this Prairie  
Flower of ours !

This volume of the royal West we bring in grateful  
gage,

We open at the frontispiece and give it to the Age,  
Who wrote the word "Chicago" twice upon the title-page!

## CHICAGO.

A WIDE-WINGED bird, a schooner brown,  
Swam shoreward in a lazy way,  
And shook her lifted plumage down,  
    Where in a wild-rice cradle lay,  
    As tender as a water-cress,  
    The Moses of the wilderness !  
An empty Egypt lay in sight,  
    No Sphinx to stare the ages out,  
No Pharaoh nor Israelite,  
    A painted savage lounged about,  
    A paddle in his gray dug-out,  
And watched the child beside the lake;  
    Fort Dearborn's guns were marble mute,  
The world walked in by trail and wake,  
    As silent as a naked foot.  
Ah, picket line beyond the law,  
    Where cloudless nights were such a boon,  
For half the year the sentry saw  
    His nearest neighbor in the moon !

This Moses rent his swaddling bands,  
    He sprang upon his youthful feet,  
And beckoning to the drowsy lands  
    Made half the world Chicago Street,  
That found at last, where'er it went,  
    The gate-way of the continent.  
Some Samson gave a mighty lift  
    And sent the ponderous gates adrift:  
By dust and wave, by wheel and sail,  
    And glittering wake and ringing rail,  
In cloud and calm, and day and night,

In lumbering wain, and lightning train  
That flies as if its load were light,  
The engines with their hot simoom  
Throb redly through the midnight gloom,  
The genii pant; the giants row,  
The hosts are going West to grow !  
The world is coming up the road !  
The highway clear, the gate-way broad !

A monotone from farthest West !  
Was it a growl of heavy breath  
Through White Nevada's snowy teeth ?  
Or murmur from a Thunder's nest ?  
Or echoes of the coming world  
From Rocky Ranges backward hurled ?  
Like trumpet's mouth the opening roar,  
It widens, deepens more and more,  
Until, behold in lengthened line,  
With fragrant leaves and silken shine,  
The train from China at the door !  
And all the while the nerves of wire  
Are thrilled with quick electric fire,  
And East and West talk back and forth  
Round the great circles of the earth  
With instant words that never wait,  
Like lovers at a garden gate  
When roses blow and moon is late !

## DEATH OF GENERAL GRANT.

REJOICING earth is young again ! In rhythm and  
in rhyme,  
The splendid days of summer all march in perfect time.  
The graves are hidden everywhere, and the earth is in  
its prime.  
Then *boom*—a single thunder falls along the horizon's  
edge  
As if a mighty storm misstepped upon a cloudy ledge.  
The sun is shining all the same—*boom*, like an earth-  
quake thrill,  
As if a forest monarch fell when all the winds were still.  
*Boom*—*boom*, just sixty breaths apart ! great syllables  
of grief,  
For he has conquered peace at last, the general and  
chief—  
Has fought it out upon the line that makes his record  
grand.  
Death in his listed slippers came, brought down his  
cruel hand,  
And never lifted it until the wondering world had seen  
His princely grace of patience, his fearlessness serene,  
His fortitude sublime, that made, all garlanded with  
fire,  
The Lord's old martyrs smiling stand like statues on  
the pyre,—  
His Doric dignity of soul with which, one after one,  
He climbed each lofty eminence that kindled in the sun,—  
With which, all honors laid aside, the grandest and the  
last,  
He saw the whole broad world salute, as on he calmly  
passed,—

With which he watched reluctant death strike life's  
poor tattered tent,  
"Let us have peace" he might have said: "blest fur-  
lough!" So he went.  
Then death, the sentinel, relieved, left — life's last bat-  
tle o'er —  
The great commander naught to do with dying any  
more.  
The whirling roar and rage of wheels whereon the swift  
earth runs,  
Are trodden into silences by the tramp of minute-guns;  
From citadel to citadel they flash the tidings on,  
Alaska's shining battlements, the mighty Oregon,  
Until around the Golden Gate, the sunset at half-mast,  
The breaths of lamentation cloud the hemisphere at  
last!  
Oh, heavy-hearted cannon! mourn your master as ye  
may,  
Oh, ghosts of thunders that he hurled on many a battle  
day!  
The world in pride and tenderness will hold Grant's  
fame in trust  
When all ye roaring batteries have reddened into rust!  
Like frosted flowers the colors wilt upon the leafless  
mast,  
And droop as if death's icy breath had chilled them as  
he passed.  
Toll! toll! and the high dim chambers of great cathe-  
drals send  
Far and wide their undulations as the broad horizons  
bend;  
Toll! toll! and under the finger of slender village  
spires,

In the domes and lofty towers where turrets mount like fires,  
The slow-tongued bells of Christendom wail for the hero dead,  
As if God's vast aerial arch were a belfry over head.  
Be dumb, ye guns! Oh flags, unfold and show your risen stars!  
Let all your colors blossom up and glorify the spars!  
The Old Commander, by and by, before the world will stand,  
The freedom of the ages in the hollow of his hand,  
Will stand upon historic page forever in the light.  
Henceforth and evermore Good Morn! Let no man say "Good Night."

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## THE TWO ARMIES.

ONE bright September day I rode  
Through prairie sweeps horizon-broad,  
And saw a host a million strong  
Drawn up in columns dense and long,  
All silken-tasselled and beplumed.  
No bugle blew, no cannon boomed,  
No orders rang along the lines  
But whispers as in woods of pines.  
They stood erect in bright array  
And filled the splendid eye of day.

Nine English miles from front to flank,  
Nine English miles from wing to wing,  
And as I flew from rank to rank  
They came about with stately swing.

What hosts are these that wave the sword ?  
 And quick returned the answering word,  
 "One Standing Army of the Lord !"

Now open out, ye legions green !  
 Let strange battalions march between  
 Up to the front as they were wont,  
 Ay, let the azure squadrons through,  
 A grander armament than you,  
 Two hundred thousand Boys in Blue !  
 The nation's graves have ebbed away  
 And blent in dust the blue and gray.

All peaceful as a field of maize,  
 No billowed flags nor battle's blaze;  
 Thank God for calm from pine to palm,  
 Strike up the benediction psalm :  
 Now unto God be all the praise,  
 To Blue and Gray good morn ! good night !  
 With one accord strike hands for right,  
 And one the glory and the sheen,  
 We'll fight new battles in the green !

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### THE MINGLING OF THE NATIONS.

A MEMORY OF THE CENTENNIAL.

**D**EAD and gone Truth's faltering lisper  
 Rent the recantation robe,  
 Galileo's feeble whisper  
     Rings around the startled globe.  
 Tremble out the joy, ye steeples,  
     While your iron welkins roar,  
 Met and mingled, Babel peoples

Sundered by the seas no more.  
Met and mingled ! Turban, tartan,  
    Lotus Egypt, lily France,  
Moslem, German, Spaniard, Spartan,  
    South Sea Isles from tropic trance,  
Lapland snow-drops, Persian roses,  
    Grecian laurel, English oak,  
Erin's shamrock, land of Moses,  
    Cedars where the Saviour spoke,  
Palm and pine and Judah's willows,  
    Grand Brazil whose rainbows broke,  
    Showering all her leaves with light,  
Arctic with its marble billows,  
    Dead and pallid anthracite.  
Scotland's thistle, Scotland's Scott,  
    Robert Burns and Robert Bruce  
Who bid all earth "forget-me-not"  
    And Time flings out his flag of truce !  
Land of Hamlet, hills of Homer,  
    Almond eyes and Saxon hair,  
Alps of Tell and sands of Omar,  
    Ivory land and Northern Bear.  
Gliding on with Orient greeting  
    See blue-trouser'd thatched Japan  
Cool with palm-leaf breezes, meeting  
    Ermined Russia with a fan !  
Palmetto, Ophyr, Oregon,  
    Call the roll of nations off  
From Herr and Don to China John,  
    From Malabar to Malakoff,  
Egypt ! Earth's own eldest daughter,  
    Colorado, silver bride,

One mountain-born and one of water,  
    Eldest, youngest, side by side.  
In and out the halls of wonder,—  
    Centennial grand the ground,  
Mingled nations passing under  
    Flags of all the globe around,  
Coming, smiling, greeting, going,  
    Flags above them flaming, glowing,  
Like October's frosty woods,  
    Gathered like the Judgment Day,  
    Like the tides in Fundy's Bay,  
Ebb and flow the Multitudes.  
And above them, ay, above them,  
    Dearer than the Unicorn,  
Forty million hearts to love them,  
    Fairer than the Crescent Horn,  
Like sacred fire on altar-place,  
    Lily-white and red as Mars,  
Like some broad wing of angel grace  
    Brightly flare the Stripes and Stars !  
There, in clear or cloudy weather,  
    Be it day or be it night,  
Ever shine they altogether,  
    Stricken sparks of empire light.  
“What o'clock by time sidereal ?”  
    Hark, the world's gray sentries cry.  
Behold that banner blue ethereal  
    And the Stars shall make reply.  
Over all, “Old Glory” gleaming,  
    Whiter than the driven snow,  
Fairer than an angel's dreaming,  
    Woven in no loom below,

With an Olive Branch upon it  
And a Christmas Holly spray,  
Words far sweeter than a sonnet  
Written with a sunshine ray:  
Glory unto God forever!  
Hosanna to the Lord again!  
Battle blast the nations never,  
Peace on earth — good will to men.

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## CENTENNIAL BELLS.

HAVING written a poem I made a pilgrimage to Independence Hall to see the subject. It was a delight to find the awkward wound has never healed; that the gloomy dome is dingy; older than the Republic, but with a refreshing suspicion of greenness. The sacred text is there yet; the first proclamation of liberty, that in the Old Testament is a command, but transferred to the Old Bell was a prophecy. The iron preacher pounded and expounded from that verse and stuck to the text as nobody else has since Paul stood on Mars Hill. There are old Mission Bells a-many that are dumb, but Independence Hall has a Bell with a Mission, and so it can never be hushed.

I put the old man in the belfry and gave him white hair and made him as glad and as mad as he could live; and I set the boy on the stairs to call out to the ringer when the signing was done, and presented the lad with a pair of blue eyes because it is a fast color and I liked him; and yet I knew all the while that the Magi of the West, who are the Paul Prys of mankind and "disturbers of the peace" of the quick and the dead, declare the old man had no more idea for what he was ringing than the bell-wether of a flock of sheep, and that there was no such boy on the stairs nor any boy at all. If the incident is a fiction it is a melancholy pity, for it ought to be a fact.

## CENTENNIAL BELLS.

Ye belfry'd blacksmiths in the air,  
Smite your sweet anvils good and strong !  
Ye lions in your lofty lair  
Roar out from tower to tower along  
The wrinkled coasts and scalloped seas  
Till winter meet the orange breeze  
From bridal lands that always wear  
The blessed blossoms round their hair,  
Centennial Bells, ring on !

Pour out, ye goblets, far and near,  
Your grand melodious iron flood,  
Till pine and palm shall think they hear  
The axes smite the stately wood,  
Nor dream the measured cadence meant  
The clock-tick of the Continent,  
The foot-fall of a world that nears  
The field-day of a hundred years.

Ye blossoms of the furnace fires,  
Ye iron tulips rock and swing.  
The people's primal age expires,  
One hundred years the reigning king.  
Strike "one," ye hammers overhead,  
Ye rusty tongues, ring off the red,  
Ring up the Concord Minute-Men,  
Ring out old Putnam's wolf again.

Ring down the curtain on To-day  
And give the Past the right of way,  
Till fields of battle red with rust  
Shine through the ashes and the dust

Across the Age, and burn as plain  
As glowing Mars through window-pane—  
How grandly loom like grenadiers  
These heroes with their hundred years !

Ring for the blue-eyed errand-boy  
That quavered up the belfry stair,  
“They’ve signed it ! Signed it !” and the joy  
Rolled forth as rolls the Delaware.

The old man started from a dream,  
His white hair blew, a silver stream,  
Above his head the bell unswung  
Dumb as a morning-glory hung ;  
The time had come awaited long,  
His wrinkled hand grew young and strong,  
He grasped the rope as men that drown  
Clutch at the life-line drifting down,  
The iron dome as wildly flung  
As if Alaska’s winds had rung.

Strange that the founder never knew  
When from the molten glow he drew  
That bell, he hid within its rim  
An anthem and a birth-day hymn.

So rashly rung, so madly tossed,  
Its old melodious volume lost,  
Its thrilled horizon rent and cleft,  
Of sweet vibration all bereft,  
And yet to hear that tocsin break  
The silence of a hundred years,  
Its rude discordant murmurs shake  
And rally out the soul in cheers

Would set me longing to be rid  
Of sweeter voices and to bid  
Centennial Bells be dumb.

Although no mighty Muscovite,  
No iron welkin rudely hurled,  
That bell of Liberty and Right  
Was heard around the girdled world.

Land of the green and golden robe,  
A three hours' journey for the Sun,  
Two oceans kiss thee round the globe,  
Up the steep earth thy rivers run  
From geologic ice to June,  
A hundred years from night to noon.  
In blossom still like Aaron's rod,  
The clocks are on the stroke of one—  
One land, one tongue, one flag, one God !  
Centennial Bells, ring on !

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#### DEARBORN OBSERVATORY, CHICAGO.

FROM my chamber last night I looked out on the sky  
No mortal can reach without waiting to die,  
And I saw a few ships of Infinity's fleet,  
And the light at their bows lit the dew in the street  
That dying men crush with irreverent feet.  
Broadside to this port ridged and roughened with  
graves,  
Not a boat from the shore, not a gun from the waves,  
There they lay off and on in the Blue of the Blest  
Like the thoughts of the Lord in His Sabbath-day rest !

Are we chained here for life? Are we bound to the  
clod

When the lark with a song springs direct from the sod  
To the breakers of day and the glory of God?

Have you heard of the man who was calling the roll  
Of the stars till the Seraphim called for his soul?

Who began the Lord's census and prayed for clear night  
While he counted for life the squadrons of light?

Do you know how the Pleiads made sail at the word  
And Arcturus bore down, till he fancied he heard

The wash of the sky as it rocked off a shore  
It never had touched at a signal before?

Port of Entry for stars! Where great admirals come  
And flotillas report to a Herschel at home—

In that wonderful tower whose window commands  
Not a thing in the universe fashioned with hands,

There's an eye at the window that never can sleep,  
That no ages can dim and that never can weep—

Always gazing at life, never seeing the graves,  
Though the land with its tombs mocks the sea with its  
waves—

That beckons a world and it dawns into sight,  
Gives a glance at the blue and it sparkles with light,  
Sweeps a field that the Lord had forgotten to sow,  
When He scattered the worlds like His treasures of snow,  
And a sun blossoms out from the infinite space  
Like the first flowers of spring in God's garden of grace.

## WISCONSIN.

I SAW Wisconsin's Eagle borne  
Where wildly blew the bugle horn  
And grandly flew the tattered flags  
    And bravely swelled the soldier's song,  
As if the bird from mountain lorn  
    Swooped downward from his angry crags  
    And brought the thunder-bolts along !  
And now her hands have richly strown  
    Upon the peaceful battle-field  
    The triumphs of the arts of peace  
    No costly blood has ever sealed,  
And made it nobler than a throne  
    With gifts to beautify and bless —  
Have heaped them there where yesterday  
Grim forests held the world at bay  
And Indian trails and show-shoe mails  
    Meandered through the wilderness !  
I hear the farmer's clock-tick beat  
Of axes "blazing" empire's way  
And every stroke brings sunshine down  
Entangled in a leafy crown;  
I hear the tread of myriad feet  
That walk the State's imperial street:  
I see the checkered farms in plaid  
    New woven in the looms of God,  
As if old Caledonia clad  
    In tartan bright Wisconsin's sod.  
Puissant realm ! Stand boldly forth  
A princess royal of the North,  
A sovereign's crown upon thy head

And God's first crop unharvested,  
For lo, thy plumy forests wait  
As when they made the mornings late,  
Ere woodmen's clocks began to strike

    And wake the wilderness of calm,  
And poor Wisconsin's map was like  
        The hundred fifty-second psalm !  
New York's brook trout are in thy rills,  
New Hampshire's vigor on thy hills,  
Thy woods of Maine make busy mills,  
Green Mountain air thy bosom thrills,  
The Bay State lends thee sturdy wills,  
Good-morn, New England of the West !  
I read the legend on thy crest,  
"Tis "Forward!" Pass the word along  
In trumpet peal and tuneful song,  
The standing order of the day,  
Till life's last battle ebbs away,  
And make your tablets eloquent

    Of something more than "born and died"  
And couplets on a monument--  
Grand mile-stones in the world's advance  
That catch the heart up with the glance,  
    Now grace and peace with thee abide !

## THE TENNESSEE RIVER.

IN some dead age a pioneer  
Campaigning downward to the main  
Came where the world stood up, to wear  
    A shaggy mountain's rugged chain.  
It burst the barriers ridged and ranked,  
Built a broad gate-way there, and flanked  
With all its crags on either hand  
The ranges of the Cumberland.  
This pioneer, the Tennessee,  
Swept the strong threshold clear and free  
To let the loyal legions straight  
Through Chattanooga's royal gate.  
Nobody dreamed the River played  
The Courier to each blue brigade,  
That, massed like thunder clouds together,  
Quenched all hope of pleasant weather,  
Made sun-bright earth an umber land,  
So marched the Corps of Cumberland,  
Till not a blotted Pleiad mars  
The golden legend of our bannered stars.  
The flag of Union never lost  
    A letter from its alphabet !  
We bore *their* stars at every cost,  
    Thanks unto God we bear them yet ! —  
Their Southern Cross, our Northern Crown,  
And when the great tenth waves would drown  
Them all in battle's black abyss,  
We cried, "come anything but this !"  
And lifted on heroic tide  
We said, "There are no stars beside

Except the Star of Bethlehem,  
Come life, come death, all glory unto them !"

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## BUILDING THE BRIDGE.

A PAPER kite that trailed a thread  
Beside Niagara's rainbow flood,  
Took flight and bore it overhead  
Across the gulf where thunders brood.  
The thread as if a spider spun,  
Drew cord like string of violin,  
The cord, a wire across the din,  
The wire, a chain — the bridge begun !  
The chain, the beams,— the bridge is done !  
The filmy nerves are passed along,  
The piers have shouldered every arch  
And thence they spring like larks in air  
Without a wing, without a song,  
And every stay and shroud is there !  
The waiting world begins its march !  
That thread has drawn a myriad tons !  
The world just flies the kite to-day,  
The thread is held by Freedom's sons,  
The wire begins to pay away —  
Another bridge, a grander sway,  
And so the World moves on !

## FIRE AND WATER.

ALL being ready to connect the two grand divisions of the Union Pacific Railroad, delegations from the Atlantic and Pacific coasts met, and the last spike was driven with simple but impressive ceremonies. The tie was silver-bound laurel and the spike of California gold. The wires of the telegraph were so connected that the fall of the hammer was echoed at nearly the same instant in places thousands of miles away.

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MAGNIFICENT Age ! When water and fire,  
The lamb and the lion, together conspire,  
And the atom of rain the robins are drinking  
Can set the dull iron to throbbing and thinking.  
It enters the heart of a ship in her sleep—  
There's a cloud on the sky — a wake on the deep—  
There's a soul in the oak that would kindle a king,  
And she crashes away without lifting a wing !

Take the old "Franklin press," where the dead were  
laid out,  
And the printer in mourning went plodding about,  
Till a creak and a groan broke the pages' repose,  
And the spectres in sheets, one by one, in their clothes,  
Broad-awake to the world broke their speechless repose,  
Now inspire the machine with flood and with flame,  
And call it a brother and give it a name !  
It comes down to the work with a will and a clank,  
Strikes the types in the face and the wrongs in the  
flank;  
In the flash of an eye the creature has caught  
And kindled and glowed with the life of the thought !  
Stand clear of the thing ! It is nearing the brink

Where a being unborn is beginning to think !  
 It flutters its plumage, and drifts the world white —  
 And it snows down the ages its treasures of light !  
 It flutters its plumage — this marvellous bird,—  
 Put a lock on your heart and beware of the word  
 That it pulses abroad, for creation has heard.  
 The lightning's vernacular thunder is dumb,  
 The bolts strike the word, talk English and come;  
 The surge tells the billow, the breakers repeat,  
 Till the waves of the sea wash the words to your feet,  
 Dry-shod from the anchorage down in the brine,  
 Swung up by the cable, a creature divine.

See the forge's first-born with its sinews of steel,  
 A nerve at each lever and axle and wheel,  
 All ready to fly and just ready to feel,  
 Pluck out of its caskets great handfuls of power,  
 The flocks of mankind all shorn in an hour  
 And the fleeces just granted this Thing for a dower,  
 To weave as it went a wonderful robe  
 To be flung on the sea and apparel the globe !  
 Born last of a furnace and first of a dream,  
 It learned elocution from eagles that scream;  
 Lo, the flash of its eye as it kindles the track  
 With the wild at its front and the world at its back !

I beg you to think of the pioneer's stroke  
 That the sleep of the wilderness lazily broke;  
 The blow of that axe was the beat of the clock  
 That timed the whole route from Plymouth's gray rock.  
 Now you bend your ear down to the marvellous wire,  
 That orbit man strung for articulate fire,—  
 For globe and for lightning a nerve and a lyre,—

And you start at a grander chronometer's beat,  
 As strong and distinct as a step in the street,  
 Away there in the desert, away here in the mart,  
 So near that you think it the beat of your heart,  
 When the silver-bound laurel lay fast in its place,  
 And they gave to the work its finishing grace,  
 And you heard with your soul, when the hammer let  
     fall,  
 Drove the golden spike home for good and for all !  
 That couplet of iron — match the line if you can,  
 The grandest of epics yet uttered by man —  
 Has heaved up the sky, reft the blue from the green !  
 See the Western horizon sublimely careen  
 To let in the East and its kingdoms between !

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### THE WONDERS OF FORTY YEARS.

THE maps, those portraits of the earth, have changed,  
 Grown gay with harvests, eloquent with man ;  
 Where once the Lord's uncounted cattle ranged,  
     Unmeasured mountains rose and rivers ran  
 As nameless as the clouds, now stand great marts ;  
 And flocks of hamlets, heaven in their hearts,  
 Graze grassy worlds from mountains to the seas.  
 The unencumbered air of forty years ago  
 Perfumed with orchards in their pink and snow,  
 With valley lilies ringing bells beneath,  
 With lilac blossoms, and the human breath  
 Of tides of clover rising to the knees,  
 And over all, like severed buds, the bees  
 Are blown about the congregations sweet,  
 While plantain leaves print off the white man's feet.

The exile Payne who taught the world to sing  
The song of "Home," of human songs the king;  
And he who saw our bannered night of stars  
Defying red-coats, bombs and British tars

Yet waved above the Fort at "early light,"  
Unlocked his heart and cast the key aside,  
And wedded flag and home whate'er betide

In song exultant at the splendid sight.  
Those men were living in our breath of time ;  
Their themes have grown majestic. Hear the chime  
Of fifty millions strong from palm to pine !  
Their themes were grander than they dreamed. What  
meant

A sheaf of States now means a Continent !  
Two million miles of acres free and broad  
Have turned twelve empires, fallen into line,  
We give the glory to our Fathers' God.  
They strung the slender thread of talking fire,  
The little nerve of lightning's swift desire,  
And four small words took wing, flew single file,  
And in a flash had made their fortieth mile,  
The first electric line in all the land ;  
And those four words were reverent and grand,  
A text of Scripture by a maiden brought,  
And the first message ran: "What hath God wrought?"  
The bondsman's chain has tumbled into dust,  
The debtor's prison bars are rent and rust,  
And we discern through Wrong's dismantled gates  
And clouds and fire, a free United States !  
Three cheers for manhood ! Earth has made a march  
And nations double-file through Freedom's Federal  
arch !

And we were here, we boys and girls of old,  
When that man plucked a laurel from the sky  
And crowned himself as one that cannot die,  
The brilliant advent of a world foretold  
No mortal eye had seen, and dared declare,  
What little less than inspiration dare,  
With finger pointed at the blank abyss,  
“There lurks a world of sixteen globes like this  
All belted into one, that makes the rounds  
Along life’s picket-line and solar bounds.”  
“Now turn,” this hero said, “the telescope  
Upon that realm beyond all daytime’s hope,  
And you shall see the stranger coming in  
From regions where they never die nor sin!”  
The solemn clock that told the time of stars  
Beat through the silence like a signal gun—  
Then came a dimness as of filmy spars,  
Then in the telescopic field a dawn,  
Then clear and steady came the glory on,  
And lo, great Neptune surging round the sun  
On his long route three thousand million miles!  
As, if, in pulling round our floating isles,  
Blown out to sea in some dead æon past,  
He, just returned, were making port at last!  
Five earthly centuries make three years for him,  
He widened out our planetary realm,  
Doubled the Solar System’s ancient rim,  
The world of worlds grows vaster, and the dim  
Thought falters, and is glad that God is at the helm!

## THE TELESCOPE.

THE far is near. We train the lidless eye,  
Whose glance, like Faith’s, can penetrate the sky,

Against the Blue. The restless heavens swarm  
With busy worlds before that breathless gaze,  
As careless fleets caught out in tropic storm  
Sow thick as grain the ocean's fallow ways,  
And vast flotillas, Argonauts of stars,  
With decks of glory and with golden spars  
Come bearing down on this terrestrial coast,  
Down wing-and-wing, this God-commissioned host,  
Till powdered daytimes strow the dusty sky,  
And gloom profound, as if all worlds had gone  
And left the earth where starry Bethlehem shone,  
The velvet darkness of an Ethiop's eye,  
Lets loose at once innumerable morns  
As standards blaze when blow the bugle horns.

#### THE TELEPHONE.

The far is near. Our feeblest whispers fly  
Where cannon falter, thunders faint and die.  
Your little song the telephone can float  
As free of fetters as a bluebird's note,  
Quick as a prayer ascending into Heaven,  
Quick as the answer, "All thy sins forgiven ";  
Broad plains between us, rivers wild and wide,  
Deserts defy and mountain heights deride,  
And yet that song, bright sparkling as new wine,  
The self-same instant charms your heart and mine.  
The Lightning writes it, God's electric clerk ;  
The engine bears it, buckling to the work  
Till miles are minutes and the minutes breaths ;  
And yet the words grow wilted like the wreaths  
That crowned a brow in some forgotten time,  
While long ago that melody and rhyme  
Warm from your lips had died upon my ears,

Lighted a smile or clouded into tears.  
And yet this nothing but a voice, without  
    A face, a winsome glance, a pair of lips,  
This spectre of our speech that goes about,  
    Is warm live language in a sad eclipse.

## THE TELEGRAPH.

The far is near. We neighbor with Japan,  
We greet a brother when we meet a man,  
We feel the sorrow ere the sigh is hushed,  
We learn the fragrance ere the flower is crushed,  
    Some *human* flower that dwelt half-way around  
The globe; that faltered, fell and went  
Right into camp beneath the greensward tent,  
    While other flowers stood sentry on the ground.  
Oh, words with wings, be like the bird that bore  
    The ark-bound sailor of the shoreless sea,  
The olive-token. Fly abroad and be  
Earth's sweet evangels now and evermore !

## THE OLD SONGS.

The dear old songs of forty years ago  
Come stealing back melodious and low;  
"The minute-gun at sea" rings off the shore,  
    Again "I see them on their winding way,"  
"Last Rose of Summer" blooms beside the door  
    And "Erin's Exile" breathes his mournful lay,  
And "The Minstrel Boy to the War has Gone,"  
To his grave and his glory marching on.  
A thousand times true has it been since then,  
They marched away boys, turned heroes and men  
And never came back to their dying day.  
The "Lingering Star with lessening ray"

Grows far and faint beneath the "Silver Moon"  
That rolls right on above the "braes of Doon";  
Those "Bounding Billows," do the girls implore  
To "Cease your motion" on the shivering shore?

And he who sang—"is not the rose for me"  
Feeds with his heart a rose's root to-night,  
Lends to its buds his poor lips' crimson light  
And lives transfigured in the Persian tree.

The girls who begged some unknown cruel swain  
And sang "Oh, give me back my heart again"  
Have kissed a grandchild since that heartful time,  
Have joined the "great majority" sublime  
That sing new songs unheard in earthly clime!  
Ah, sweet old voices of the day "lang syne,"  
These forty years have made them half divine.

## POEMS OF SENTIMENT.

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### JENNY JUNE.

LIKE a foundling in slumber the summer day lay  
On the crimsoning threshold of even,  
And I thought that the glow through the azure-arched  
way

Was a glimpse of the coming of Heaven.

There together we sat by the beautiful stream,  
We had nothing to do but to love and to dream

In the days that have gone on before,  
These are not the same days, though they bear the same  
name,

With the ones I shall welcome no more.

But it may be that angels are culling them o'er  
For a Sabbath and summer forever;

When the years shall forget the Decembers they wore,  
And the shroud shall be woven, no, never.

In a twilight like that, Jenny June for a bride,  
Oh ! what more of the world could one wish for beside  
As we gazed on the river unrolled,  
Till we heard, or we fancied, its musical tide  
When it flowed through the gateway of gold !

"Jenny June," then I said, "let us linger no more  
On the banks of the beautiful river;  
Let the boat be unmoored, and be muffled the oar,

And we'll steal into Heaven together.  
If the angel on duty our coming descries,  
You have nothing to do but throw off the disguise  
That you wore while you wandered with me,  
And the sentry shall say, 'Welcome back to the skies,  
We long have been waiting for thee.'"

Oh, how sweetly she spoke, ere she uttered a word,  
With that blush, partly hers, partly even's;  
And a tone like the dream of a song we once heard.

As she whispered, "This way is not Heaven's,  
For the river that runs by the realm of the blest  
Has no song on its ripple, no star on its breast;  
Oh! *that* river is nothing like this:  
For it glides on in shadow, beyond the world's West,  
Till it breaks into beauty and bliss."

I am lingering yet, but I linger alone,  
On the banks of the beautiful river;  
'Tis the twin of that day, but the wave where it shone  
Bears the willow tree's shadow forever.

---

### TO MY WIFE.

THERE are thousands who need not stray out of their own hearts  
to find the reason for recording here this tribute of long ago.  
The world is full of little graves, and the thousands I mean, have  
been crowned, each in her tearful turn, the mother of a sinless  
angel child.

As of the woodman's work, so of the mother's love; it will  
always be true that the little chips are nearest the heart.

## TO MY WIFE.

## I.

LUCY, don't you hear the voices, gentle voices in the air;  
Like the waving of a pinion, like the panting of a prayer,  
    Like a song of singers dead,  
    Like a dream of beauty fled,  
When we cannot quite remember what the angel vision said?

## II.

Oh, the voices of the Yesterdays! Time's melancholy choir,  
With the twilight singing minor and the dawning singing air,  
    With the clouds of glory round  
    And their brows with garlands bound,  
And a million golden minutes strown like grain upon the ground.

## III.

Ah, they must be up the River, and it cannot be a dream,  
For the wind is blowing soft, my Love, is blowing *down* the stream,  
    And is wafting to your ears  
    What your list'ning spirit hears,  
Till the past grows dim and dimmer through the mist of many tears.

## IV.

And a little form in white seems to rise beyond the rain,  
And a little hand to beckon and a little voice complain,  
    To your heart a moment pressed,  
    Then away to be a guest,  
And to sing among the Angels in the Gardens of the  
Blest.

## V.

For the little infant spirit that a brighter angel bore,  
A darker angel challenged at the threshold of the door,  
    And he bade it back again,  
    As returns the morning rain  
To the heaven o'er the mountain and the glory o'er the  
main.

## VI.

In his arms the angel clasped her, and as he turned and  
smiled  
He crowned you there, the mother of a sinless angel  
child.  
    Ah, the beauty that she wore,  
    Borne so swiftly on before,  
Just to learn the Heaven for "welcome" to that bright  
and blessed shore !

## VII.

But Lucy, 'twill be by and by, when Junes have fol-  
lowed June,  
And many a sad December night has played a solemn  
tune;  
    When the snow upon your hair  
    Forgets to melt and lingers there,  
And a form so frail and faded trembles in the old arm-  
chair.

## VIII.

Then here's my hand, my Dearest, we'll travel on together,  
In days both clear and cloudy, in rude and rainy weather,  
Till the winter at the last  
Shall the shadows Eastward cast  
And our lives and loves forever shall be blended with the Past.

---

## “AND FORBID THEM NOT.”

IT is May among the blossoms but November in my breast,  
There's a warble in the lilacs but my bird has left the nest,  
Not a path upon the planet that her little feet have pressed.

Sure an angel must have halted on an errand going by,  
Must have whispered to the truant and have taught her how to fly,  
And she followed up the flutter of his pinions to the sky.

From the Babel of my sorrow she has stolen out the song,  
She was tangled in our heart-strings and she took our hearts along  
With her clinging hands so delicate and yet so wondrous strong.

As the reapers miss the daisies when they sweep the  
golden grain  
And they rise like constellations when the day begins  
to wane,  
So has Death just missed my darling and she surely  
lives again.

Ah, how strange that in her dying she became a death-  
less child,  
Like the children in the story upon whom the Saviour  
smiled,  
That eighteen hundred years and more the ages have  
beguiled.

She has conquered sin and sorrow, she has triumphed  
over time,  
Though the sexton told the story when he rung a sin-  
gle chime,  
Yet the echo of her little life shall linger like a rhyme,  
And shall turn the thoughts to music that we think in  
dreary prose,  
And this breath of being rounded till it scarce outlived  
a rose,  
As the rivulets are woven till the river seaward flows,  
With our own be ever blended till the dream of earth  
shall close.

## A POET'S LEGACY.

JUNE SEVENTH, 1873.

PAST twenty-one and Love's of age,  
 Has lost his wings and gained his eyes,  
 Looks down on life's unended page,  
 Looks up and sees the azure skies.  
 He's safe to stay while we abide,  
 His time for flight forever past,  
 'Twill be we three whate'er betide,  
 While roses blow and lilacs last.  
 No bankrupt Firm is this of ours,  
 But rich as June in suns and showers.

Bring out the ledger ! Every thing  
 That men call gains shall be for sale—  
 Ay, let them go for what they'll bring,  
 We'll keep our losses till we fail !  
 Of old when Judah's children wed,  
 They pledged their faith in crimson wine,  
 Then broke the crystal as they said:  
 "No lips shall touch its brim but mine !  
 This shall no meaner love profane !"  
 The shattered symbol fell like rain.

None stooped to pick the fragments up—  
 All knew the thing the token meant:  
 Behold, one love had crowned the cup,  
 No matter where the goblet went !  
 And so, my wife, in Judah's way  
 We've drank life's golden draught of wine,  
 And strown the vase's glittering clay—  
 See where the sculptured fragments shine !

The ledger now ! Let it be known  
How rich and grand this Firm has grown.

The flock of clouds we always keep  
Are marked with rainbows every one,  
We know our own celestial sheep  
That throng the blue and graze the sun;  
'Tis fine to see them trooping home,  
Their fleeces tangled thick with stars;  
'Tis fine to watch them as they come  
And wait at Evening's golden bars;  
Their shadows fall upon our way,  
As if old Night had walked by day

And left her foot-prints as she went;  
Some look like graves of friends that died,  
Whose sunken mounds the sward indent,  
Of babe and gallant bridegroom's bride,  
Of golden tress and silver hair,—  
And some like hopes our hearts have shed,  
That fell as leaves in autumn air  
And crush beneath our thoughtful tread.  
Dear wife, we have no clouds to sell,  
They make the sunshine *show* so well !

An angel troop this Firm commands,  
A score and one they stand in line,  
And swing aloft in radiant hands  
A score and one of Eves divine !  
Of Christmas Eves and Christmas bells  
And Christmas gifts with blessing twice  
That bring us all, by mystic spells  
In kissing range of Paradise !

My wife, we would not give them up  
To mend again the shattered cup !

A score and one of kindling Junes,  
The warm and blushing brides of Time,  
Are ranged along like notes in tunes,  
And keep our hearts in rhythmic rhyme.  
We own a score of belfry'd towers  
Where bird-like wishes bred and born  
Are singing songs — those birds are ours —  
We count our twentieth New-Year's morn !  
No birds to sell, nor songs nor chimes,  
We'll keep them all till harder times !

We have some castles gray and grand  
That cloudless suns do shine upon,  
Along their halls retainers stand  
And speak Castilian every one.  
Nobody dies who dwelleth there,  
They have a clime where tempests swoon,  
No graves to make, no empty chair,  
And Christmas in the month of June !  
I'll make the deeds — you'll sign them sure,  
And castles twelve we'll give the poor !

We've had a wealth of dreams as rife  
As corn along the bladed west,  
We have them still in broider'd life  
Like flowers upon a wedding vest.  
There comes a little sounder sleep,  
There comes a richer flush of dawn,  
Till then we'll keep our flocks of sheep,  
No castle, cloud, or angel gone.

Down flag of red ! We'll make no sale  
But hold our losses till we fail !

To make all sure my Will behold:  
    " To her who kept this Firm alive  
I now bequeath my clouds of gold,  
    My angel choir, my castles five,  
My score of belfries, all my sheep,  
    The fragments of the sculptured vase,  
To have and hold and ever keep!"  
    And yet I've done no act of grace,  
They all are yours, but whose are you ?  
I freely give and keep them too !

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## BEAUTIFUL MAY.

O H, have you not seen on some morning in June,  
When the flowers were in tears and the forest in tune,  
And the billows of dawn broke bright on the air,  
On the breast of the brightest a star clinging there ?  
Some Sentinel Star, not ready to set,  
Forgetting to wane and watching there yet ?  
How you gazed on that vision of beauty awhile,  
How it wavered till won by the light of God's smile,  
How it passed through the portals of pearl like a bride,  
How it paled as it passed, and the Morning Star died !  
The sky was all blushes, the world was all bliss,  
And the prayer of your heart, " Be my ending like this!"  
So my beautiful May passed away from life's even,  
So the blush of her being was blended with Heaven;  
So the bird of my bosom fluttered up to the dawn—  
Ah, a window was open — my darling was gone —

A truant from time, from tears, and from sin,  
For the angel on watch took the wanderer in !  
When she warbles to me the New Song that she sings,  
I shall know her again notwithstanding her wings,  
By those eyes full of Heaven—by the light on her hair—  
And the smile she wore here she will surely wear there !

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### THE DESERTED HOMESTEAD.

IT is clean gone at last—the old homestead ! It has forgotten its vernacular. Its household words are no longer the accents of Mother Country but of Faderland. The Dutch have taken it. It is Holland, and the old "turbulent tides" of memory will soon be diked out forever.

But whatever becomes of it, it has helped mankind. "How far that little candle throws its beams; so shines a good deed in this naughty world." Did you ever see a rainbow die?—the sort of architecture that must be repaired every second, or it will crumble into atoms of colorless rain. And so the drops one by one fall into their places, the arch changing each instant and always the same, until the rain comes slow, and the tints grow faint, and the Bow goes out, and the cloud is bare of blazonry as if God had never put a seal to the Covenant. True and beautiful homes are drops of rain, and they are the hope of the world.

He is thrice blest who has some mere earthly thing to tie to; a thing made bright and holy by unselfish affections, simple recollections, small sorrows and large delights. A birthplace is that thing. It is better to have in the family than a cow or a carriage, or even a castle after the household birds are grown and flown. A right-hearted man pays out the line that ties him to the place of his childhood, but he never cuts it, for so it is he can hold on to himself, and keep all of his mental belongings together. It is a perpetual clue to his identity.

Many people seem never to know what they have done with themselves; they have lost so much, forgotten so much, despised so much, of feeling, affection, faith, hope and desire, in an ambition to play flying artillery in life's race, that who they are is a puzzle even to themselves. This calamity never happens when you have that place to tie to. The immortal tramp, Bunyan's Pilgrim, would tell you, if he could, that a man travels stronger and freer under a knapsack, if only it is not the pack of sin, than when he travels light. Let everybody, therefore, make a bundle of childhood and homestead and take them along They are burdens only as wings are : only lift them and they will lift you.

## THE DESERTED HOMESTEAD.

## I.

FULL twenty summer-times ago  
I walked along this country road,  
When life and love were both in blow  
And none would dream it ever snowed.  
I saw a schoolma'am coming down,  
Her rippling hair was golden brown,  
I saw her firm and slender hand,  
I saw her foot-prints in the sand,  
A pair of rhymes in dainty type  
That brought to mind the old Gazette  
Where village poets used to pipe —  
The cricket corner where they set  
In little letters chirps of song  
Whose lines were only cricket long —  
And read them off as children tell  
A poem by the nonpareil.

## II.

I turned highwayman as I stood  
Beneath these oaks now older grown

And cried as ruder robbers would,  
“Thy life and treasure are my own!”  
I halted her with love’s surprise  
And saw my answer in her eyes;  
A bee was busy with a flower,  
A bird-sang low from maple bower,  
The old white school-house swarmed with noise;  
We heeded not the babel rout,  
The girls knew better than the boys  
What meant the meeting there without,  
And smiling stood and watched me hold  
Her hand in mine, and ran and told!  
And some were mothers long ago  
And some caught out in early snow.

## III.

Again I walk the road and meet  
*Another schoolma'am coming down*  
Who was not born when I did greet  
Her sister of the golden crown.  
I told this story to the girl,  
And something like a living pearl  
Lit up the eyelid of the child;  
She flashed it off and then she smiled.  
There should have been a Bow, I thought,  
That sunshine and that drop of rain—  
And then the present was forgot  
And perished days returned again.  
This thoughtful, sad September day  
Has slowly worn itself away,  
The sun and moon are face to face,  
He wanes in strength, she gains in grace.

## IV

It is not day, it is not night,  
Where are the feet that came and went?  
Here stands the homestead still and white  
    And silent as a monument.  
Its curtained windows in eclipse,  
Its hall door fast as marble lips;  
Never before were they denied  
The summer flowers and hours outside.  
Though tides of fragrance always sweep,  
    In warmth and light it has no part,  
There in the daytime sound asleep  
    And empty as a broken heart.  
The willow fountain swings and swerves  
And flings its leaf-wrought spray in curves;  
Strange, since the loved no longer stay  
It has not wept itself away.

## V.

Here round the house the brown paths ran  
    To lichenèd gate and stoop and well,  
Full forty years since they began  
    To warm when busy bare feet fell.  
The wilderness redeems its own  
With clover leaves and plantain strown;  
The old meanders dimmed and grassed,  
The surge has washed them out at last.  
The dry old grindstone, crank bereft,  
    Worn like a pebble in a brook,  
And little but the axle left,  
    Stands idle in that shady nook.  
Ah, lusty times when naked arms

That conquer deserts into farms,  
Ground off the sickle's edge of wire  
'Mid sparks of wit and sparks of fire,  
And scythes, swung down from apple limb,  
Were set upon its rippling rim.  
Gone are the arms that turned the crank  
And gone the stroke through grasses rank.

## VI.

The showers have washed the colored light  
    Of rainbows down upon the place,  
The phloxes flame in red and white,  
    The pansies in their violet grace;  
The saucy jaybird's azure flash,  
The rubies of the mountain ash,  
The dear old aster's gay cockade,  
The maples with their green parade,  
The yellow daisies prim and clean,  
    The orange butternut that pays  
In golden leaves of spotted sheen  
    Its early dues to Autumn days,—  
All these no weary heart can wile  
    Like loving smiles from living eyes  
That light the Lord's last holy mile  
    To perfect peace and Paradise !

## VII.

Ah, flood-wood wreck, old cider-mill !  
    With apple cheese and amber flow,  
Where used to gather round thy rill  
    The boys and bees of long ago.  
How sweet new apples make the air  
    As fragrance in a maiden's hair.

I see their constellations gleam  
Like planets in a fairy's dream,  
As if the Maker should baptize  
Each new-born star He bade arise  
In rare perfume, and all should shine  
With aromatic light divine !

## VIII.

In silence standing on this brink  
    Of desolation and decay,  
Now in this amber cup I drink  
    To the dear dead and gone away.

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## ONE STEP MORE.

## I.

NOVEMBER'S rude and sleety drummers  
Are trampling down the fallen Summer's  
Rent uniforms of buff and red,  
And crape clouds all the world o'erhead  
As if this very world were dead !  
The gray drum-majors of the rain  
Are beating every window-pane  
That shows a ghostly face again.

## II.

Then up the road that shadows blotted  
Till all the dark was leopard-spotted,  
There shone a dim and twinkling light  
As if the sad disastered night  
Had shaken down with blow or blight  
Amid the gloom and rain and wood  
Some star of faintest magnitude.

## III.

Poor fire-fly strayed from domes of azure,  
Poor taper dropped from God's embrasure,  
So tossed and drifted round about  
To flutter wild and flicker out  
And leave the night in deeper doubt.  
Poor lost, forlorn, electric spark  
To quench in rain and drown in dark.

## IV.

It rounds like daisies broadly blowing  
In California's floral snowing,  
The glimmer is a growing gleam,  
The gleam a glow, the glow a beam,  
As dawns afar Cyclopic steam.  
I see its planetary face,  
Its small horizon's curve of grace.

## V.

I see a lantern boldly swinging,  
I hear its bearer bravely singing,  
His steps as sure upon the sod  
As if the cloudless hosts of God  
Beheld him as he walked abroad.  
No idle speculative eyes  
Are lifted to the clouded skies.

## VI.

A little day the boy is bearing  
For rain and darkness little caring,  
All safe within his home-made noon  
What is Arcturus or the moon  
To him that sings his Bonny Doon?  
Within the candle's curving shore  
His next step lies — he needs no more.

## VII.

A lantern with a soul to man it  
Will light you round the stormy planet.  
On that one step all steps await —  
March on, my lad ! The hour is late —  
Another step — click goes the gate,  
The hearth-blaze shines along the floor,  
The light flares out from open door,  
The goal is gained with the one step more.

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## FOUR YEARS OLD.

I HAVE boys and a boy. I put him in small capitals because he is so far off I cannot see him very well without. I must look over his father's head to discover him at all, and yet he is so near I can touch him with my heart

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## I.

FOUR years old by the golden clock  
That ticks in your breast by day and night,  
Four years old by the golden lock  
Turning to brown in the growing light,  
How soft is the clasp and firm is the hold  
You have of our hearts at four years old !

## II.

Georges Four have mounted the throne  
Of the lion-crowned and the unicorn,  
Longing to reign from zone to zone,  
Keeping the pace of the travelling Morn,  
You into blossoming ready to burst,  
Royally, rightfully, George the First !

## III.

Georgie, to you a splendid reign  
And conquests grand that never can fade;  
Warm at the heart and cool at the brain,  
Whether your sceptre be sword or spade,  
Pencil or pen — whatever you do  
Be loyal to life, be earnest and true.

## IV.

Greek to you are these words of mine,  
Time will interpret them by and by,  
When, far-away Boy of the family line,  
You bear your brow to the mid-day sky,  
Seeing the shadows fall both ways,  
Watching the round of the ended days.

## V.

Ah, sweeter tongues will be talking then,  
The voiceful air shall be filled with speech,  
Thoughtfully, truthfully, sad, as when  
The sea throbs slow on the sandy beach.  
The words they say you will dream your own,  
As if your echo were talking alone:  
“Look North,” they say, “whence valorous breath  
Ever blows from the pines and the snows,  
Look East where night is meeting its death,  
Look South for the zephyr and rose —  
Look West where day lies dead on the breast  
Of a cloud that is crimson and blest,  
And the crown of the world is repose.  
Look within and count up the full beat  
Of a heart without flutter or roll  
Like the fall of true soldierly feet

That shall measure the march of the soul,  
 Where Faith, Hope and Charity meet  
 Is the cardinal point and the goal."

## VI.

You'll read these words another day,  
 My far-off Boy with a Boy between,  
 Your manhood strong may lead the way  
 When I am sleeping under the green.  
 Now Georgie darling, never forget,  
 But say, "Though dead he is speaking yet."

## THE ISLE OF THE LONG AGO.

## I.

O H, a wonderful stream is the River Time,  
 As it flows through the realm of Tears,  
 With a faultless rhythm and a musical rhyme,  
 And a broader sweep and a surge sublime  
 As it blends with the ocean of Years.

## II.

How the winters are drifting like flakes of snow !  
 And the summers like buds between;  
 And the year in the sheaf — so they come and they go  
 On the River's breast with its ebb and flow,  
 As they glide in the shadow and sheen.

## III.

There's a magical Isle up the River Time  
 Where the softest of airs are playing;  
 There's a cloudless sky and a tropical clime,  
 And a voice as sweet as a vesper chime,  
 And the Junes with the roses are staying.

## IV.

And the name of this Isle is the Long Ago,  
And we bury our treasures there;  
There are brows of beauty and bosoms of snow —  
They are heaps of dust, but we loved them so !  
There are trinkets and tresses of hair.

## V.

There are fragments of song that nobody sings,  
And a part of an infant's prayer,  
There's a harp unswept and a lute without strings,  
There are broken vows and pieces of rings,  
And the garments that *she* used to wear.

## VI.

There are hands that are waved when the fairy shone  
By the mirage is lifted in air;  
And we sometimes hear through the turbulent roar  
Sweet voices we heard in the days gone before,  
When the wind down the River is fair.

## VII.

Oh, remembered for aye be the blessed Isle  
All the day of our life till night,  
And when evening comes with its beautiful smile,  
And our eyes are closing in slumber awhile,  
May that "Greenwood" of soul be in sight.

## GOING HOME.

A POOR disheartened emigrant returning to his eastern home from the far West, met in the streets of La Porte, Ind., a hearse on its way to the City of the Silent. He turned aside, halted, and, with his wife and children, watched the sad procession. The poor fellow had told his story to some one never suspected of a spark of poetry, who, as he watched the meeting from the sidewalk, said, "Well, one is going East and the other going West, but they're bound the same way after all—both going home!"

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DRAWN by horses with decorous feet,  
A carriage for one went through the street;  
Polished as anthracite out of the mine,  
Tossing its plumes so stately and fine,  
As nods to the night a Norway pine..

The passenger lay in Parian rest,  
As if, by the Sculptor's hand caressed,  
A mortal life through the marble stole,  
And then till an angel calls the roll  
It waits awhile for a human soul.

He rode in state, but his carriage-fare  
Was left unpaid to his only heir;  
Hardly a man from hovel to throne  
Takes to this route in coach of his own,  
But borrows at last and travels alone.

The driver sat in his silent seat,  
The world as still as a field of wheat  
Gave all the road to the speechless twain,  
And thought the passenger never again  
Should travel that way with living men.

Not a robin held its little breath,  
But sang right on in the face of death;  
You never would dream to see the sky  
Give glance for glance to the violet's eye,  
That aught between them ever could die.

A wain bound East met the hearse bound West,  
Halted a moment, and passed abreast;  
And I verily think a stranger pair  
Have never met on a thoroughfare,  
Or a dim by-road, or anywhere:

The hearse as slim and glossy and still  
As silken thread at a woman's will,  
Who watches her work with tears unshed,  
Broiders a grief with needle and thread,  
Mourns in pansies and cypress the dead;

Spotless the steeds in a satin dress,  
That run for two worlds, the Lord's Express —  
Long as the route of Arcturus's ray,  
Brief as the Publican's trying to pray,  
No other steeds by no other way  
Could go so far in a single day.

From wagon broad and heavy and rude  
A group looked out from a single hood:  
Striped with the flirt of a heedless lash,  
Dappled and dimmed with many a splash,  
"Gathered" behind like an old calash,

It made you think of a schooner's sail  
Mildewed with weather, tattered by gale,  
Down "by the run" from mizzen and main —

That canvas mapped with stipple and stain  
Of Western earth and the prairie rain.

The watch-dog walked in his ribs between  
The hinder wheels with sleepy mien;  
A dangling pail to the axle slung;  
Astern of the wain a manger hung —  
A schooner's boat by the davits swung.

The white-faced boys sat three in a row,  
With eyes of wonder and heads of tow;  
Father looked sadly over his brood,  
Mother just lifted a flap of the hood,  
All saw the hearse — and *two* understood.

They thought of the one-eyed cabin small,  
Hid like a nest in the grasses tall,  
Where plains swept boldly off in the air,  
Grooved into Heaven everywhere —  
So near the stars' invisible stair

That planets and prairie almost met —  
Just cleared its edges as they set !  
They thought of the level world's "divide,"  
And their hearts flowed down its other side  
To the little grave of the girl that died.

They thought of childhood's neighborly hills  
With sunshine aprons and ribbons of rills,  
That drew so near when the day went down,  
Put on a crimson and golden crown  
And sat together in mantles brown;

The dawn's red plume in their winter caps,  
And Night asleep in their drowsy laps,

Light'ning the load of the shouldered wood  
By shedding the shadows as they could,  
That gathered round where the homestead stood.

They thought — that pair in the rugged wain,  
Thinking with bosom rather than brain;  
They'll never know till their dying day  
That what they thought and never could say,  
Their hearts throbbed out in an Alpine lay,  
The old Waldensian song again:  
Thank God for the mountains, and Amen !

The wain gave a lurch, the hearse moved on —  
A moment or two, and both were gone;  
The wain bound East, the hearse bound West,  
Both going home, both looking for rest,—  
The Lord save all, and His name be blest !

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#### MY OUT-OF-DOOR CRICKET.

LOST somewhere to-day in the red-headed clover  
A bit of a watch in an ebony case —  
I miss its quick tick like the heart of a lover,  
    The musical tick in the meadow-grown place.  
I hear it no more. Is it run down and dead ?  
Will it come by and by when the winter is sped ?

My out-of-door cricket, that in long afternoons  
    Ticks off the sweet silences dear to my heart  
When the clouds are aground and the aspen-tree swoons,  
    And the dragon-fly hangs like a motionless dart  
On a feverish blue-blooded finger of air  
Held up in a hush for an angel at prayer.

The bright pool at my feet is watching a cloud  
 As the eyes of my spaniel look up in my face,  
 With the cloud white and still as the fold of a shroud  
 Like a cataract filming its crystalline grace.  
 The birds hold their wings at "trail arms" in the sun  
 As dragoons their dull scabbards when battle is done.

My out-of-door cricket, oh come and abide  
 When summer is dead and the trumpets are blowing,  
 In the twilights of fire by my hearth's sunny side  
 To tell in thy way how the winter is going,  
 While outside the dim window the troubled snow drives  
 And the blasts make the flames half afraid for their  
 lives,—

In thy musical way, my out-of-door cricket,  
 And sing to the monotone tea-kettle strain,  
 With thy chirp dear and sweet as the click of the wicket  
 When my Love lifts the latch and is welcome again,—  
 One voice will be left me of summer-time fled  
 Though life's bees have done humming and roses are  
 dead.

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## GOD BLESS OUR STARS FOREVER.

"**G**OD bless our Stars forever!"  
 Thus the Angels sang sublime,  
 When round God's forges fluttered fast  
 The sparks of starry Time!  
 When they fanned them with their pinions,  
 Till they kindled into day,  
 And revealed Creation's bosom  
 Where the infant Eden lay.

“God bless our stars forever !”  
Thus they sang, the seers of old,  
When they beckoned to the morning  
Through the Future’s misty fold ;  
When they waved the wand of wonder —  
When they breathed the magic word —  
And the pulses’ golden glimmer  
Showed the waking granite heard.

“God bless our stars forever !”  
‘Tis the burden of the song  
Where the sail through hollow midnight  
Is flickering along,  
When a ribbon of blue Heaven  
Is a-gleaming through the clouds  
With a star or two upon it  
For the sailor in the shrouds.

“God bless our stars forever !”  
It is Liberty’s refrain  
From the snows of wild Nevada  
To the sounding woods of Maine;  
Where the green Multnomah wanders,  
Where the Alabama rests,  
Where the Thunder shakes his turban  
Over Alleghany’s crests;

Where the mountains of New England  
Mock Atlantic’s stormy main,  
Where God’s palm imprints the prairie  
With the type of Heaven again —  
Where the mirrored morn is dawning,  
Link by link our Lakes along,

And California's Golden Gate  
Swinging open to the song —

There and there, "Our stars forever!"

How it echoes! How it thrills!

Blot that banner? Why, they bore it  
When no sunset bathed the hills.

Now o'er Bunker see it billow,  
Now at Bennington it waves,  
Ticonderoga swells beneath,  
And Saratoga's graves.

Oh, long ago at Lexington,  
And above those minute-men  
The Old Thirteen were blazing bright,  
There were only thirteen then!  
God's own stars are gleaming through it,  
Stars not woven in its thread;  
Unfurl it and that flag will glitter  
With the Heaven overhead.

Oh, it waved above the Fathers  
On the pinions of the prayer,  
Oh, it billowed o'er the battle  
On the surges of the air,  
Oh, the stars are rising in it  
Till the Eagle waits the sun,  
And Freedom from her mountain watch  
Will count her fifty-one.

When the weary years are halting  
In the mighty march of time,  
And no new ones through the threshold  
Of its corridors sublime,—

When the clarion call "close up!"  
Rings along the line no more,  
Then adieu, thou blessèd banner,  
Then adieu, and not before.

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## ROCK EYRIE.

TO HON. THOMAS B. BRYAN.

WHERE mountains lift forever at high tide,  
Where air is crystal and the near stars ride,  
Empyreal Admirals of the Blue,  
And silver snow-drifts mock the silver true,  
'Mid Nature's high relief, Rock Eyrie, hail !

Oh, friend afar, could prayer of mine avail  
Thy cloudless soul should match thy cloudless skies,  
Crowned with all joy thy Dulce Domum rise,  
Be every day good-morning and good-night,  
Till dawn celestial brings the perfect light.

---

## WELCOME HOME.

THE dust of John Howard Payne, having been borne across the world, was consigned, on a pleasant day in June, 1883, to its final rest in the District of Columbia. The spirit that christened him John Howard, after the great philanthropist, seems prophetic, for it named the boy, that "father of the man," who in the coming time should write out, in simplest household words, the heart of the home-loving world, and so prove himself the gentle lover of the bond and the free. The incident of the Rappahannock River strikingly shows that "Sweet Home," of all earthly melodies, is the master song.

## WELCOME HOME.

Oh, dews and flowers of splendid June,  
With pearls and garlands grace his tomb,  
Who taught Milan's dear Maid the tune  
That times the whole world's loving feet,  
To which all golden hearts shall beat,  
Where'er they wait or weep or roam,  
Of "Home, sweet Home" forever.

O'er mariner on the Spanish main,  
The tattered miner in his tent,  
The wanderer on the throbbing plain  
Where yellow noons by simooms wheeled  
Smite Desolation's flinty shield,  
A second Bow of Hope is bent  
In "Home, sweet Home" forever.

And when to bugle and the blast  
Where battle turns the lilies red,  
Through flashing columns standing fast  
The soldier cuts the narrow lane  
That lets him through to Glory's fane  
He hears an angel overhead  
Sing "Home, sweet Home" forever.

The weary traveller who waits  
In twilight's dim and drear abode  
The opening of the Pearly Gates  
That some faint ray or friendly star  
May shine abroad through doors ajar  
And show his fading eyes the road,  
Sighs "Home, sweet Home" forever.

A camp of Blue, a camp of Gray,  
A peaceful river rolled between,  
Were pitched two rifle shots away,  
The sun had set the West a-glow,  
The evening clouds were crimson snow,  
The twinkling camp-fires faintly seen  
Across the dark'ning river.

Then floated from the Federal band  
The "Spangled Banner's" starry strain,  
The Grays struck up their "Dixie Land,"  
And "Rally Round" and "Bonny Blue"  
And "Red and White" alternate flew,—  
Ah, no such flights shall cross again  
The Rappahannock River!

And then, above the glancing "beam  
Of song" a bugle warbled low  
Like some bird startled from a dream  
"Home, Home, sweet Home," and voices rang  
And Gray and Blue harmonious sang—  
All other songs were like the snow  
Among the pines when winds are stilled,  
And hearts and voices throbbed and thrilled  
With "Home, sweet Home" forever.  
No matter what the Flag unfurled,  
Ah, Dulce Domum rules the world!

Sweet Singer of the Song of men,  
Thou comest late to claim thine own,  
But when the daisies rise again  
Arrayed in all thy borrowed dust,  
The world will hold thy words in trust—  
And Ages chant from zone to zone  
Thy "Home, sweet Home" forever.

The Memnon murmured song, they thought,  
When dawning day his lips impressed,  
And flushing marble warmed and caught  
The sweet Ionic of the Greek;—  
Ah, truer far *thy* lips shall speak  
Nor wait the touch of sun or stars,  
For thee the night-time has no bars—  
Welcome dear Heart and take thy rest  
At "Home, sweet Home" forever.

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"GOD KNOWS."

I.

A N emigrant ship with a world aboard  
Went down by the head on the Kentish coast,  
No tatter of bunting at half-mast lowered,  
No cannon to toll for the creatures lost.  
Two hundred and twenty their souls let slip,  
Two hundred and twenty with speechless lip  
Went staggering down in the foundered ship.

II.

Nobody can tell it — nor you nor I,  
The frenzy of fright when lightning thought  
Wove like a shuttle the far and nigh,  
Shot quivering streams through the long forgot  
And lighted the years with a ghastly glare,  
A second a year, and a second to spare,  
'Mid surges of water and gasps of prayer.

III.

The heavens were doom and the Lord was dumb,  
The cloud and the breaker were blent in one,

No angel in sight, not any to come,  
God pardon their sins for the Christ His Son !  
The tempest died down as the tempest will,  
The sea in a rivulet drowse lay still,  
The roses were red on the rugged hill —  
The roses that blow in the early light  
And die into gray with the mists of night.

## IV.

Then drifted ashore in a night-gown dressed  
A waif of a girl with her sanded hair,  
And hands like a prayer on her cold blue breast,  
And a smile on her mouth that was not despair:  
No stitch on her garment ever to tell  
Who bore her, who lost her, who loved her well,  
Unnamed as a rose — was it Norah or Nell ?

## V.

The coasters and wreckers around her stood,  
And gazed on the treasure-trove landward cast,  
As round a dead robin the sturdy wood,  
Its plumage all rent and the whirlwind past.  
They laid a white cross on her home-made vest,  
The coffin was rude as a red-breast's nest,  
And poor was the shroud, but a perfect rest  
Fell down on the child like dew on the West.

## VI.

A ripple of sod just covered her over,  
Nobody to bid her "good-night, my bird!"  
Spring waited to weave a quilt of red clover,  
Nobody alive had her pet name heard.  
"What name?" asked the preacher, "God knows,"  
they said,

Nor waited nor wept as they made her bed,  
But sculptured "God knows" on the slate at her head.

VII.

The lesson be ours when the night runs wild,  
The road out of sight and the stars gone home,  
Lost hope or lost heart, lost Pleiad or child,  
Remember the words at the drowned girl's tomb.  
Bewildered and blind the soul can repose  
Whether cypress or laurel blossoms and blows,  
Whatever betides for the good "God knows"—  
God knows all the while—our blindness His sight,  
Our darkness His day, our weakness His might.

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**IT WILL ALL BE RIGHT IN THE MORNING.**

I.

WE long for the brighter time coming,  
And we watch for it early and late,  
To hear through the halyards the humming  
That shall lift the dead sails of our fate,  
To leave Babelmandeb's sad Gate,  
And we sigh for it, try for it,—wait !  
It will all be right in the morning !

II.

The lilies light up the brown water  
And the diamonds grow in the gloom,  
And the moon is the midnight's daughter,  
And the night-flowering aloe will bloom  
As a trophy that garlands a tomb,  
When the daytime has gone to its doom,  
It will all be right in the morning.

## III.

Half way up in his mounting the lark  
Meets the morn in its eastward-bound flight,  
And the carol born down in the dark  
Is a marvellous lyric of light,  
Is a burst of melodious might,  
Is the *Io triumphe* of Night,  
It will all be right in the morning.

## IV.

In the grave-yard of Arctic the Dismal  
Where the bones of dead glaciers are strown,  
Where they tower, the icebergs abysmal  
Are the buds of bright flowrets full blown,  
There they cling to death's borders alone,  
And they thrill to Euroclydon's moan,  
It will all be right in the morning.

## V.

Through the long dim day of dull twilight  
They repose like a soul at a shrine,  
There under Aurora's North sky-light,  
That memorial window divine,  
At the very same intervals shine  
As their sisterhood under the Line,  
It will all be right in the morning.

## VI.

Twelve hours for unfolding and waking,  
And twelve for their slumber and sleep—  
Who told them when day should be breaking,  
Who taught them when shadows should creep  
That the calendar true they can keep?  
Faith, arise like the moon-loving deep,  
It will all be right in the morning!

## VII.

Born trouble is better than borrowed,  
 Light and darkness are blent, but beware  
 Of the man who never has sorrowed,  
 The fine gold unalloyed is not there.  
 Let us come to the bridges of care  
 Ere their crossing of danger we dare,  
 And the thought in our hearts ever there,  
 It will all be right in the morning.

## VIII.

If earth's weary burdens are sorrow,  
 If the noblest of triumphs denied  
 Are always beginning to-morrow,  
 If we fail to take time at the tide,  
 If old friends wane away from our side,  
 Still the trust and the truth will abide,  
 It will all be right in the morning !

## THE FLAG.

O H, glimpse of clear Heaven,  
 Artillery riven,  
 The Fathers' old fallow God seeded with stars,  
 Thy furrows were turning  
 When plowshares were burning,  
 And the half of each bout is redder than Mars !  
 Flaunt forever thy story  
 Oh, wardrobe of glory !  
 Where the Fathers laid down their mantles of blue,  
 And challenge the ages,—  
 Oh, grandest of gages,  
 In covenant solemn, eternal and true.

## THE PAST IS WITH US STILL.

## I.

WHEN Science grasped a filmy thread of light  
That dimly floated in the empty air,  
And dared to draw the silver woof of night  
Until she saw a star was clinging there,  
She trembled at the vision she had seen,  
It only told her that a star had been !

## II.

That starry tress had faded in its flight,  
So long it wandered through the blue abyss,  
Before it met a mortal's startled sight,  
While yet it journeyed from that world to this,  
Perhaps some hand had borne the wondrous urn  
Beyond the range of human thought's return,  
Perhaps extinguished — e'en the stars do die —  
Ere Heaven unfolded to her earnest eye.

## III.

Things are around us that have ceased to be,  
And starry hopes, extinguished long ago,  
Still link us to the past. Who would be free,  
Or give that tearful past for all we know,  
Or dream, of bliss and blessing yet to come ?  
All, all is mortal till it reach the tomb,  
And all unblest until it find its wings !  
That last year's Heaven of stars ! Ah, who would give  
For aught besides ? Filled with translated things  
Too bright to die, too beautiful to live.

## TWO RIVERS AND TWO SHIPS.

WHEN certain people say of a man "he is sentimental," they mean to pluck out his beard and make a finish of his manhood; of a woman, that she is an amiable fool. The stout world sometimes fears anything tender but "legal tender," steaks and muffins. In cultivating hard heads on their shoulders men come to carry trilobites in their left breasts. As a rule, all childhood shrinks instinctively from him who forgets or despises his own, and he who will not confess to a soft place in his heart is quite sure to have one in his head.

Of all earthly charms there is none so ineffable and exquisite as the charm of youth. It invests indifferent things with a grace that is almost beauty. That it must perish like a vanishing vision at dawning day, has been a burden of lament to the manliest of men. A love for creeping back under the world's Eastern eaves, and being for a moment "the father of the man" again, is almost as restful and inspiring as a view from Bunyan's Delectable Mountains whence the Celestial City is in sight.

These paragraphs are written as a placard of warning, a sort of "Beware" to those who would have nobody know they were ever ten-toed boys, lest they may blunder upon poetical premises with so much that breathes the spirit of a new Beatitude: "Blessed is the land whose sons are all boys and whose daughters are all girls."

## TWO RIVERS AND TWO SHIPS.

I'VE seen such rivers rolling down  
The world I thought them travelling seas,  
So vast they made the land look lone,  
And spreading wide their seamless robe  
Defied the barrier and the breeze  
To circumnavigate the globe.  
I've seen such ships with piles of cloud  
Three heavens deep among the pines

Stayed with the web of spidery lines,  
So queenly fair, so kingly proud,  
It took my breath to see them sail  
So near the sky's blue valance veil  
They might have heard an angel's hail.  
And yet they never thrilled and warmed  
Until my very soul was stormed,  
As when the meadow brook was passed  
With shouts of joy by pilgrims bold  
That played the Israelites of old —  
The girls with cambric frocks half-mast,  
The boys' blue trousers at the knee,  
And twinkling feet walked pebbly street  
And so we crossed the mimic sea;—  
As when I launched the dug-out boat  
All freighted with the mallow cheese  
And saw the jack-knife fabric float  
Triumphant in the fresh'ning breeze;  
The little fish like lancets keen  
Cut in and out with silver sheen,  
The green-legged frog and greener boy  
All leap to see the craft go by,  
The sweet-flag waves its two-edged blade,  
The smoky puff-balls fusillade,  
A bob-o'-link rings bells of joy,  
A red-bird flashes fire-works nigh,  
It is the Fourth of my July,  
Until, the cat-tail jungle reached,  
My gallant bark careened and beached.  
  
And then we boys and girls sat down  
And from a chip hat's battered crown  
Shook out, while every tongue was whist,

Some nut-cakes with the good old twist,  
I ask like Oliver "for more!"

Some apples red and water-core,  
Some ribb'd and amber gingerbread,  
Some roasted corn — ah, what a head  
It must have been to fill the hat! —  
And then in bliss the bevy sat,  
And all in concert strangely mute  
With roasting ears we played the flute.

One boy turned judge and sentenced men

To die who then were yet unborn,  
And one who heard and heeded when  
"Boots and saddles" blew the bugle-horn;

A sabre kissed him and the scar  
Was lighted with a golden star.

One girl for whom the angels sent  
Did hear the message, smiled, and went  
So long ago nobody knows  
Just where she takes her last repose.

Another lives. Her silver hair  
Is shining with to-morrow's dawn,  
Her mournful eyes are full of care.

Which best? Who knows? Brave heart, live on!

## THE BEAUTY OF DEATH.

O H ! Nature loves her children, how the fond  
Blue Heaven is hovering all beyond  
The bended brim of our full-jewelled day,  
Till earth to azure softly melts away.  
In her great bosom there is room for all,  
For titled lord and trembling leaf to fall ;  
Her clouds are anchored and her rains are shed,  
O'er lilies faded, as o'er princes dead ;  
The mournful murmur in the river's song —  
The bird's lament — to both alike belong.  
Dear Mother of us all ! How very small  
A place thou need'st for human pride and all  
Its jewelry — our treasures, one by one,  
Sparkle like rain, and sparkling — they are gone.  
They say the Indian Summer is the breath  
Of myriad leaves descended to their death.  
Ah ! sweet and rare the dying that can shed  
The smile of May o'er gray November's dead !  
To be a leaf and lie upon the breast  
Of summer air — to roof a cup of song,  
That by and by should seek the morning cloud,  
And glide from dawn to dawn in melody along,  
And sing at Heaven's portals out aloud ;  
To be a leaf, and put a glory on  
For dying in — when gentle winds are gone,  
To loose the tenure on the forest's crest,  
And winnow earthward to a breathing rest —  
Would be thrice blest, if this be all of life —  
These tardy dawns, these struggles and this strife,  
These hopes deferred, these clouds out-biding rain,  
The beating bosom and the throbbing brain.

That have no Sabbath, in Time's weary train.  
But those spent billows where the loved were laid,  
Where smiles were few, and long "good-nights" were  
said,  
Where tears were shed, and prayers were made, and  
song

Was sung. Oh ! never dream the dead are there.  
Nature endures, indeed, but not for long,

The peopled grave. The summer wind shall bear  
Its wakened beauty to the air of God.

Something of loveliness within a shroud  
We folded, and we hid it 'neath the sod.  
Nature shall find it, and from clod to cloud  
Shall waft it. The summer wind on its sweet wing  
Shall bear it round the world. How she shall mould  
That dust of ours ! The emerald Spring  
Shall wear it, and the blue brocade of gold  
Wherein blest Autumn blushes like a bride,  
Shall have for warp and woof, a ravelled thread  
From that old robe of ours we laid aside.

Is this a dying ? This a being dead ?  
The latest fabric from the looms sublime  
Hath nothing fairer than that old shall be.  
One treasure from thy halls, O gentle Time !  
Give us thy graves. 'Tis all we ask of thee !  
Through the wide arc, from seraph down to sod,  
That dust shall vibrate 'neath the breath of God.

'Tis joy to know these weary hearts we wear,  
Shall beat in Nature's greater bosom still;  
'Tis bliss to feel there is no "vacant chair"  
In earth's dear homestead. "I feel," the poet said,  
"The daisies growing o'er me." The dying child

Of song, obedient bent his gentle head,  
And died. Oh ! no, not died — those flowers that smiled  
Around his grave, were springing from his heart;  
Dear thoughts of his that could not all depart.  
Oh ! never seek the dead in billowed graves;  
Like sweet stars sprinkled on the rolling waves,  
They are but shadows — death in brief disguise,  
Look anywhere but there. May be the skies  
Retain them, or the air and light of God.

The drop of rain that glitters on the leaf,  
The dewy world, that satellite of sod,

Were once perhaps right eloquent of grief;  
Nature distilled them, and they would not stain

An angel's cheek. If angels ever weep  
For joy, well might it be in such sweet rain,  
Where married days lie side by side asleep —  
Where night's divorce forever is withdrawn,  
And double mornings brink unclouded dawn.

It is not life that stains the window pane;

That dimly floats upon the azure air;  
For God did link the labyrinthine chain

Round something nobler than the garb we wear.  
We make the grave the Mecca of the thought —  
We dream that beauty there has come to naught,  
As if the rain that glitters gaily down  
The bended day wherewith God binds the frown  
Of tempests, would linger 'mid the seven,  
And hang suspended in an empty Heaven.  
The birds that there in green recesses sing,

Within the maple swinging overhead,  
May bear away upon each glossy wing,  
Some trait of beauty that we fancy dead.

The rose-tree blooms above the sunken grave;  
Her lips are pale below; perhaps they gave  
The mantling blush those roses wear to-day—  
Their breath the fragrance that they waft away.

We build the tomb — we dream we dyke out day  
And fling a gloomy fortress round decay;  
But Nature finds the idle dust we hide —  
She cleaves our marble and she mocks our pride.  
The hungry air devours the bolts and bars —

The mournful rains slow weep the walls away —  
Time's busy fingers part a glimpse for stars,  
And darkness yields the tenantry to-day.

The grim old pyramids — the mountain caves,  
Where one by one the ancient dead were laid,  
Like ocean sands behind receding waves  
Bear not a trace that human footfall made.

Dead? What is dead? Call we disrobing death —  
The "little sleep" that thought and heart may take —  
The "little sleep" a whisper or a breath,

The morning light or falling rain may break?  
Oh! no. The great High Admiral who guides  
Life's fleet, and sets His signal on the tides,  
For leaves that drift — who pilots in the day  
And leads the ivy on its winding way,  
Will bring true souls, however toss'd and driven,  
Clasped round with glory, to the port of Heaven.  
If there are those who do not dare to die,

And who would dread to see this great blue tent  
Of God slow closing like a dying eye, —

No hand to fold — no footprint where they went  
Who passed away, then let them rock a thought,  
From youth to manhood on the naked breast;

A living thought that shall become the guest  
Of Time, and to all heart, and right, and truth,  
Take up and breathe for aye the prayer of Ruth.  
It is as if the lark ascending nearer God  
Should leave some fragment of his song below —  
As if dear June should leave upon the sod  
A flower or two, to part December's snow.  
The summer and the bird would not be dead;  
One only passed, and one just overhead;  
The lark would sing while Earth had heart to hear,  
And June would linger through the deathless year.

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## THE GARDEN THERMOMETER.

O, a silver pulse in a crystal vein  
And it silently ebbs and flows,  
And marks the chill of the North wind's will  
And it times the bloom of the rose.

And it tells of snow in the spotted air,  
And it shrinkingly shows the sift  
Of frosty stars where the crimson spars  
Of the Arctic admirals lift.

When the silver mounts in the vein of glass,  
Then the butterfly's wing'd brocade  
Shakes out of reef like a folded leaf  
And the corn ranks off in brigade.

When the silent pulse to the Zero sinks,  
Then as brave as a lord's saloon  
The nail-heads shine in the walls of pine  
Like the dew-drops under the moon;

And the kitchen fire is an oriflamme,  
    And the panes of the window show  
The astral bloom and the diamond plume  
    And the mimic May of the snow.

There are fans of pearl, there are shells with rings,  
    There are violets ghostly white,  
And tarns and urns and the fretted ferns  
    Of the winter-time in the night.

There is nought so cold in the Arctic zone  
    As a heart that is "ten below,"  
At the snowy line of the dwindling pine,  
    On the glacier field or the floe.

And no Boreal blast from its ghastly gloom  
    Is as chill as the frosty-souled  
With thoughts as clear as the Windermere  
    And the heart left out in the cold.

Let us pray for hearts with an endless June  
    Though the winds of the world are wild,  
No zero there nor a fever'd care  
    But the blue-eyed faith of a child.

---

*A LAMENT FOR ADAM.*

I AM always bewailing the desolate fate  
    Of the primal old Crusoe who led off the race  
With no boots and no boyhood, no swing on the gate,  
    What could Paradise be with its garden of grace  
To a being who never had felt himself grow,  
    But had stood up and lived like the Parian snow  
At the touch of the sculptor? Lone Nobody's son

With a world to himself and a census of one.  
Lo, a man with no story to linger behind,  
If we only except the Darwinian kind—  
Lo, an orphan by birth, though no creature had died  
Or been born, wooed or wed as bridegroom or bride.  
I look up the gray æons with wondering thought  
    Where humanity's Duke in his nakedness strode,  
All uncrowned and untravelled, unlettered, untaught,  
    With no fire but the sun and a lair for abode.  
Not a word could he write, not a breath could he read,  
It was Adam "*his X mark,*" to the lease and the deed.  
Ah, the hermit of Eden could never have dreamt  
    That his boys would wear pinions forever unfurled  
        And away down the line would track up the round  
            world  
With their highways and thoughtways, as a comet  
        unkempt,  
A fourth Fury of fire by Omnipotence driven,  
Dishevels her hair on the bosom of Heaven;  
Would have turnpiked the planet and graded the sky,  
Swept meridian lines in the glance of an eye  
With their flashes of lightning and footprints of ink,  
Till the lumbering globe was beginning to think !

The world was all ready for bridegroom and bride  
    When Adam awoke from his wonderful swoon  
And Creation's fair crown lay alive by his side;  
    For a trinket of silver, the honey-bee's moon  
Hung low in the azure, a gift from the Lord,  
    For her garments, bright emerald garnished the  
        trees,  
And her flounces and aprons slow swung in the  
        breeze,

And the violets caught her blue glance from the sward;  
 With the flush of new life she just lifted her head  
 And the roses of York blushed a Lancaster red,  
 And the whispers ran round like the rustle of leaves  
 And the young woods of Paradise laughed in their  
 sleeves.

Now Eden to Earth doth this legacy leave:  
 The month of that wedding of emerald ray  
 Shall wear through the cycles the colors of Eve,  
 Shall belong to all ages forever and aye,  
 With its birds in full song and its breezes in tune,  
 So she left her best clothes to magnificent June.

---

## THE SONG OF THE AGE.

WOULD ye know the grand song that shall sing out  
 the age—  
 That shall flow down the world as the lines down the  
 page—  
 That shall break through the zones like a North and  
 South river,  
 From winter to spring making music forever?  
 I heard its first tone by an old-fashioned hearth—  
 'Twas an anthem's faint cry on the brink of its birth!  
 'Twas the tea-kettle's drowsy and droning refrain  
 As it sang through its nose as it swung from the crane.  
 'Twas a being begun and awaiting its brains—  
 To be saddled and bridled and given the reins.  
 Now its lungs are of steel and its breathings of fire  
 And it craunches the miles with an iron desire;  
 Its white cloud of a mane like a banner unfurled,

It howls through the hills and it pants round the world !  
 It furrows the forest and lashes the flood  
 And hovers the miles like a partridge's brood !

Oh, stand ye to-day in the door of the heart,  
     With its nerve ravelled out, floating free on the air,  
 And feeling its way with ethereal art,  
     By the flash of the telegraph everywhere,  
 And then think, if you can, of a mission more grand  
     Than a mission to live in this time and this land,  
     Round the world for a sweetheart an arm you can wind,  
     And your lips to the ear of the listening mankind !

---

### THE TWO JOHNS.

**D**O you think we are crushed out of loving and living  
     By the fall of a clod, when the planet is giving  
     To the delicate foot of an ounce of a wren,  
     And then surges right up as she lifts it again ?  
 Oh, Gibeon's Sun ! He is yet under orders,  
     You can halt him to-day on death's gloomy borders;  
     Bid brave thoughts and grand deeds the dead Joshua  
     play —  
     “Stand still, mighty Sun ! ” and the blaze shall obey.

Take a page of blind John that angels have tramped  
     Till it looks as if stars broke ranks and encamped —  
     So strown about with fine gold from Ormus and Ind  
     That you wonder how angels could ever have sinned,  
     When old English brocade at such exquisite cost,  
     To tell the strange story of “ Paradise Lost ”  
     Did bankrupt the bard, so nothing remained  
     To tell us the story of Eden “ Regained.”

Look down on the page and declare if you can  
What business the grave-digger had with the man !  
Dare Hamlet's own sexton, or one of his tribe,  
Lay an ounce of dead clay upon Cromwell's old scribe ?  
Those angels of his — they have put them to rout !  
Those angels of his — they have lifted him out !  
As free of the ages as the winds of the waves,  
And abolished that gloomy old fashion of graves !

In this Christendom's realm, in some year of our Lord,  
Men attacked with a fagot the soul of a word;  
Ah, hundreds of years Christmas carols were sung,  
Ere they dwelt in this world and spoke in our tongue  
Who groped in the ashes where martyrs were chained,  
If perchance a live coal of the embers remained,  
And they blew it to life in the name of the kings,  
And the books of this Milton all took to their wings  
Like his own bird-of-paradise, crimson and gold,  
And the princes grew warm as the ashes grew cold !  
'Twas as if some old Vandal should vainly aspire  
To strike David dumb by just burning his lyre;—  
The books played Elijah — left their mantle behind,  
And it fell and unfurled, till it kindled mankind.

And that Prince of all Pilgrims, the other twin John,—  
He will walk in his sleep till the ages are gone;  
Blow softly, oh Angel ! Let him slumber right on.  
With the swing of the sledge for the music of flutes  
He beat up the world for celestial recruits;—  
He dreamed himself through to the "Beautiful Gate,"  
With "Christian" for comrade and "Mercy" to wait.  
Time's sentries cry "halt !" Hark the sturdy reply:  
Oh, be lifted, ye gates, for old Bunyan goes by !

Pass on, grand crusader ! Rude, royal, sublime,  
All Ages accord thee the freedom of Time !

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### SILVER WEDDING DAY.

A SILVER wedding means two starry days; one trembling with the ineffable grace of youth through the dews of the early East; the other, clear, calm, serene, shining down upon the middle of the world. "One star differeth from another star in glory."

A slender, smooth-faced friend, who could tumble types into position as a French clock ticks, helped the writer commit his first typographical sin by printing a book for him. It was born of an old hand-press, and bound to a board like a small papoose, in the year eighteen hundred and — well, no matter, it was before the first starry day had dawned. The friend turned editor, general, Congressional Representative, and at last turned his twenty-fifth wedding day. And so from the hills of Chenango to the Lakes of Wisconsin, a greeting went to him of the silver beard and the silver day. But these silver-mounted annuals glitter all along the year. The clock of the age strikes quarters for some pair every day. And so, from this pebble of a poem flung into the river of Time, a concentric ring may ripple out perhaps and touch yet other hearts with its little wave of cheer.

### SILVER WEDDING DAY.

#### I.

BREAK cloudless bright, thy Silver Day,  
Old friend of boyhood and of prime !  
Bind August sheaves with flowers of May,  
And ring the silver bells of Time !

#### II.

The years, like planets, rise and set,  
We bid some royal day good-by —

Stand fast, dear heart, that day may yet  
Dawn grandly up the Eastern sky.

## III.

Three bridemaids stand and bless the place:  
A stately girl with step of air—  
Another with uplifted face,  
And parted lips and golden hair—

## IV.

And one apparelléd all in white  
Save where the rose shows through the cheek,  
Save where the eyes flash blue and bright  
And look the vow she cannot speak.

## V.

I know them all ! Red, white, and blue  
Are Love's own colors everywhere,  
And there smiles Hope as young as dew,  
With tangled sunshine in her hair.

## VI.

And grander than the graceful twain,  
Lo, queenly Faith, whose heavenly eyes  
Discern the clear beyond the rain  
And catch their tint from cloudless skies.

## VII.

Joy to the Wife who stands beside  
That trefoil group of Paradise !  
God bless the bridegroom and the bride !  
As Thou hast blest, so bless them twice,

## VIII.

With rounded days, serene as June,  
That flowers the year in tropic clime,  
Through life's long summer afternoon,  
Like perfect words in perfect time.

## IX.

Chenango's greensward breaks to-day  
As grandly round the scalloped sky,  
Her billows lift the rocks of gray,  
Their wooded crests as bravely fly,  
As when they kept the world away,  
These breathless seas that never die !

## X.

This troubled earth is troubled still,  
The brooks yet run their pebbly route,  
I count each old familiar hill,  
But how "God's acre" widens out !

## XI.

The marble doors bear household words  
That charm our daily speech no more,  
Strange that the sweet old songs of birds  
Outlive the name that beauty bore —

## XII.

That youth and genius should have died  
Like waves along some drowsy shore,  
And yet these graceful elms abide  
And lilacs bloom beside the door.

## XIII.

The sunshine has a lonely look,  
The dew has vanished from the sod,

The past a worn and tattered book  
With little left but love and God.

## xiv.

Whoever dies, these live right on !  
Why play the gloomy March in Saul ?  
Be green, ye graves ! Be bright, oh, sun !  
Life is not lived without ye all.

## xv.

Be girded up, oh, heart of mine,  
And wing this greeting to the West;  
Old comrade of the days lang-syne,  
Be thou and thine forever blest !

---

## MONUMENTS.

**A**LAS, for the land where "God's acres" are vain,  
And the heroes grow grass and not heroes again,  
And Valor and Virtue wrunged out of the grace  
That can make of the grave a most eloquent place.  
They have melted dumb guns, and the effigies start  
Like the Worthies of old from the furnace's heart.  
They have knocked at the ledge of white limestone, and  
said :  
"Oh, ye sleepers, awake! and come forth, oh ye dead!"  
And, the stone from the sepulchre lifted away,  
The pale marble immortals stand up in the day !  
The untenanted tombs tumble in at their feet,  
And beside them two centuries mingle and meet.

## JULIA'S COMMENCEMENT DAY.

**S**TAY yet awhile, oh, June,  
Thou rarest blossom, sweetest flower of Time,  
Come not, oh, golden noon,  
Too soon the promise and the prime  
Will blend, and autumn end  
With winter's drear and melancholy tune.

We will not think of these,  
Enough this emerald world and shining sky,  
This perfume-laden breeze  
Like breath of angels going by  
With song, while all along  
The rolling splendors of the forest seas

And surf of lilies white  
As feet of saints that walk in Paradise,  
And moon-born day of night,  
And rubies taking wing that rise  
And hum as if the drum  
Of fairy legions beating for the fight;

The wings of books unfold  
The two-page pictures of the butterflies,  
The silver stars that hold  
Like nails the flooring of the skies  
Lest we, through some blest rent should see  
The undreamed glories tongue has never told.

Junehood and girlhood stand  
On life's far fragrant threshold side by side,  
Julia and June. Twin band  
Of Hope. Forever both abide

Until from earth's last hill  
She looks enchanted on the better land.

Oh, Sun and Cloud, blest twain !  
Be gentle, genial as a loving face,  
Like rainbows in the rain,  
Smile patience, gratitude and grace —  
Oh, Sea, break fresh and free,  
No laurels float upon a Dead Sea main.

---

### THE GOSPEL FOR THE POOR.

**I**N the Roman dungeon sighing,  
Waiting there his day of doom,  
Faith bewildered, blinded, dying,  
John the Baptist lay in gloom.  
  
Honored he, the desert preacher,  
Over all the sons of God,  
He had laid the world's Great Teacher  
Under Jôrdan's crystal flood ;

And his arms the Form had lifted  
Back to light and life again,  
That should bid the grave be rifted  
And give liberty to men.

Grand old John in heavy sorrow  
Sent this longing message out:  
“Art thou Christ?” Then dawning morrow  
Banished every cloud of doubt !

“Go tell the Baptist,” quick replying,  
This the Master's answering word,

"Blind men see the midnight flying,  
 Lame men walk, the deaf have heard,  
  
 "Lepers clean as lilies' daughters,  
 Graves are rent and dead men live,  
 Gospel free as flowing waters  
 Preached to them with naught to give."

So the Saviour crowned the story,  
 Gave the Poor His love sublime,  
 Grandest proof of Gospel glory,  
 Boundless blessings for all time !

Everywhere, oh heavy-hearted,  
 Be ye girded, glad and strong !  
 Dungeons lighted ! Doubt departed !  
 Pass the tidings right along !

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#### LAST YEAR'S DEAD.

SOME, like the Morning Star, went out at dawn,  
 When birds did sing at Heaven's gate aloud;  
 Some, like the Sun, kept shining bravely on,  
 Till in the West, beneath a golden cloud,  
 The dead Day lay in state, and lamps did burn,  
 In all of Heaven, to welcome their return;  
 And Earth was dewy with the tears she shed,  
 And bared her bosom for the coming dead.

But there, upon the Western threshold of the World,  
 They yet shall linger, and our eyes behold,  
 Till this great azure tent of Time is furled,  
 And Ages stand before God's Gates of Gold.

We cannot weep for these. The Sexton makes  
 Their graves in vain. The green Earth idly breaks  
     In voiceless billows, for her Ethiop breast  
 Shall not infold them. Let her love the flowers  
     And woo the leaves December has caressed;  
 Let her put shrouds upon the summer hours,  
     And fold dead birds within the snowy drift.  
 But these are not for her. Oh ! she may lift  
 The pall, the turf — the mighty are not there,  
     Though bell and rite and dirge were rung and said  
     And sung, no sigh nor song can make *them* dead,  
 Whom God did give His wardrobe for their wear !

As vainly dream to bear the star away  
     Shining the night out, in a drop of dew,  
     That June has shed upon the rose's crest  
 A syllable of Heaven — to some far day,  
     And think to set that crystal shrine anew,  
     In starry splendor, upon beauty's breast.  
 Oh ! Master Builder of the solemn tomb,  
 Oh ! Mighty Weaver of the shrouds of gloom,  
 These are not thine, oh Time, for they shall be  
 When not a withered leaf remains to thee !

And those who went at morning, like the bird  
     That meets the dawn a moment out of Heaven —  
 For whom a window opened, and we heard !  
     The songs of seraphs and of souls forgiven —  
 We cannot weep for them, who ever keep  
 So close to Paradise, their very sleep  
     Is white with wings, and beautiful with dreams;  
 The Foundlings of the World, see where they lie,  
     On Heaven's threshold, and above it streams

A ray of glory. Do ye deem they die,  
 When, gates ajar, they creep confiding in,  
 Truants from thee, oh Time, from tears and sin ?  
 Oh ! wondrous journey have they finished there—  
 From cradle moaning unto angel choir !

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## MISSION OF SONG.

## I.

**H**OW beautiful and strange ! The air that brings  
 The sweet small gospel from the broider'd sod,  
 Through which we see the starry camps of Even—  
 Stained through and through with glory and with  
 Heaven —  
 That floats the cloudy squadrons of a God,  
 Breaks into billows when a sparrow sings,  
 And lends these lives of ours immortal wings !

## II.

Those bird-like breaths of song sweep o'er the dumb,  
 Where waves the corn on old red fields of fame:  
 We call the roll: in accents loud and clear  
 Along the lines the soldiers answer "Here!"  
 And each green billow renders up a name—  
 With ranks unbroken, lo the columns come,  
 And old dead captains march at beat of drum !

## III.

Though David's crown is only rust,  
 Yet the stately step of his royal Psalms  
 Is as fresh as May in the fragrant dust,  
 And grand as the wind in the Palms.

'Tis a bird in the sky !  
 'Tis an Archangel nigh !  
 The whisper of God in the calms.

Corunna's Hero walks the world  
 With the rhythmic march of his Burial Song —  
 With bugle wail and banner furled  
 The old dead troopers ride along,  
 And Marion's men  
 Start out of the glen  
 With their cheer so wild and strong.

Hark ! Korner's Sword Song rings amain,  
 With its wild " hurrah " for his iron bride —  
 Bozzaris strikes for the Greeks again,  
 And the Light Brigade will ride  
 Through the Valley of Death,  
 At the poet's breath,  
 And fall into rank by our side !

## IV.

A Child of Song lay dying, and his breath  
 Went sad and slow as moves the March in Saul;  
 His hands were folded white upon his breast,  
 Like two sweet doves that wearied and had rest.  
 Those hands had touched all hearts and kindled all,  
 Until the songs came forth like birds in Spring 'neath  
 Cottage eaves. If he could die, then this was death.

## V.

Then came a breath or two of some brave strain  
 A hand began within another room,  
 And trembled there a poor unended tune,  
 A single dew-drop on the breast of June:

But twilight stained anew that growing gloom —

Those hands unfolding swept the chords again,  
Gave the last note and played the sweet refrain.  
Oh, Child of Song, how grandly thou didst die,  
Thy Life's last cadence a melodious sigh !

## VI.

These lives of ours have rhythm: every one  
A little note of that great anthem, Time,  
    Forever sounding down the world amain  
    Since fell the hammers swung by Tubal Cain.  
How grand the footfall ringing out sublime !  
    How grand to think that Anthem long begun,  
    Without our music never can be done !

— — —

## THE OLD HEARTH.

THE night is old and close to the door  
    And the red light flickers and falls  
Along the hearth and along the floor  
    And along the cottage walls.

Across the sill of the door ajar  
    And the wild weeds' desolate bed,  
A crimson gleam like a setting star  
    By the embers' light is shed.

The wind that sobbed and sighed in a dream  
    From the snow-drift shining white,  
Has bent the ray, and the brandish'd gleam  
    Like a sabre sweeps the night.

Beneath the eaves where fluttered the song  
    And the green vines swung to the strain,

The crystal barriers glance along,  
A *chevaux-de-frise* of rain.

There hangs from the wall a fragment of thread:  
When the dawn grew red on the pane,  
It marked where the Morning Glories led  
When they bugled sweet refrain.

An oak that shed a shadow at noon  
Like the cloud of an hundred spars,  
Upheld a bollow of leaves in June,  
Now has blossomed full with stars.

Across the sill does the footstep fall,  
And we stand in the cottage door,  
The shadows rise on the naked wall  
As the fitful light is lower.

The hearth is rude and broken and old,  
From a gray ledge, lifted one day,  
But feet that walk in their sandals gold  
May have worn that stone away.

Ah, feet so brave and beautiful too  
That they trod upon thorns with song;  
Like June they went, and their way we knew  
For the roses followed along !

Ah, feet so fair, we fancy the moon  
May be sometimes walking the cloud,  
Though closed the gates of the radiant noon  
And the moon is in her shroud.

## POEMS OF THE WAR.

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### CHICKAMAUGA.

O H, pearl-white Sunday on the palm  
Of Time, dear as the hundredth psalm,  
Thy pearl took fire, a ruby blazed,  
Those Boys in Blue whose valor mazed  
The world, disaster's self defied,  
Had stained thee royal purple when they died !

The gunners feed the throbbing guns  
As stokers tumble in the coal,  
They are the thunder's eldest sons  
And the pedal bases roll.  
The rattling sleet, the splintered fire,  
The smokes of torment rising higher,  
The gusts of iron and the roar  
Of hungry cannon clamoring for more.

The powder's low ! The battle clock  
Runs down ! Ten rounds — five rounds — two  
rounds —  
Now charge them like an earthquake shock  
Across the death-encumbered mounds,  
Till whirling squadrons rock and reel  
Before the flying hedge of steel !  
The pillar'd cloud, the scarlet air,

As if the simooms summered there,  
The shells with winnowing shrieks of breath  
That hatch out broods of mutilated death.

The "Pale horse" like a meteor flies  
Out from the column's broken ranks  
Through air as blue as leaden skies  
With bullets singing at his flanks.

A print upon the bridle-rein,  
The empty saddle shows a stain,  
His neigh is like an eagle's scream,  
Mazepa dashing through a dream !  
Though troubled, torn and tempest-tossed,  
They save the day at any cost,  
Across that wild red field of fame  
Dismounted Death is fighting all the same !  
The gates of hell are on the latch !

The keys are lost ! The dogs all out  
Give tongue by battery packs, to snatch  
The colors from the low redoubt  
Where Thomas stands as if he grew  
To Horse Shoe Ridge, and never knew  
That all his flags had taken root !  
And there, ah, grander than Canute,  
He bade each vast and grizzly surge,  
"Thus far, no farther ! On this verge  
Between two worlds I shall abide  
While shines the sun, whatever may betide !"

Stern Duty was his chief-of-staff,  
Bright Honor rode at his right hand,  
He gave each undivided half  
Of heart to God and Cumberland.

Front-face to death as is their wont,  
They box the compass with the Front  
While round him broad divisions swing,  
An eagle with a broken wing !  
Before him, grim gray surges roll,  
Within him, shines a valiant soul,  
Above him, flare the battle flags,  
Each leaden minute limps and lags.

The drums die down to drone of bees,  
The bugles faint as sparrows sing,  
The very cones of cedar-trees  
Have turned to bullets, taken wing,  
And puffs of smoke and death unseen  
Betray the marksmen in the green.  
Amid the whirlwind and the gust,  
Blue columns crumbling into dust,  
And wild divisions' routed raff,  
Rode Rosecrans' knightly chief-of-staff —  
Rode to the sound of cannon, side  
By side with death and just one guide,  
Without a banner or a cheer,  
This single-handed volunteer.  
Ay, see him ride through Rossville Gap,  
All Hades howling in the Valley's lap,  
Right through the fiery surf he broke,  
And then one syllable he spoke:  
Garfield to Thomas answered "Here!"  
And then he turned a cannoneer  
And trained the last Napoleon gun  
That told the field was held, the battle done.

Who dreams the Chickamauga field  
Bore nothing but a rare renown,  
When on that day, all signed and sealed,  
We paid our own red coinage down  
And grasped the Deed with bloody hand —  
See prints upon it! Let them stand —  
That gave to Federal estate  
The right of way, the freedom of the Gate !

The weary day sank slowly down  
The sky that showed a crimson stain  
From Hesper to the Northern Crown  
As if the sun himself were slain.  
How close the dreamless sleepers lay  
That night together, Blue and Gray,  
Their hearts as silent as the stars,  
All blent the bloody stripes and bars,  
Alike forgetting and forgiving,  
Done with dying and with living !

## GRANT.

"HAIL to the chief" of bright renown,  
To Grant who rang the curtain up,  
To Grant who rang the curtain down  
And brimmed Rebellion's stirrup-cup —  
Who rang the curtain up on this  
Homeric drama, where we miss  
No Greek machinery of gods,  
No drowsy Jupiter that nods,  
Where mortal men on either hand  
Were found to make the action grand.  
Oh, never lay a clouded story  
Upon this episode of glory !

## SHERMAN'S MARCH TO THE SEA.

O H, hour supreme, oh, deed sublime,  
When Sherman's hosts marched forth from Time,  
Rode into silences profound  
And breathless as a burial ground,  
And dumb to all the North and South  
As steadfast Memnon's marble mouth  
When waiting for the morning sun.  
So Sherman's deathless march begun.  
He paralyzed the nerves of fire,  
And from the loops of broken wire  
Illiterate lightnings idly swung ;—  
With flags aflame and trumpets rung  
He, eagle bold and eagle free,  
Struck out for Dixie and the Sea,  
As river mists patrol the night  
His clouds of blue just melted out of sight.

His flying front was like the drift  
Of scud before Euroclydon,  
Of sea-birds in the cloudy rift,  
One moment here, another gone.  
His cannon timed him as he went,  
He pitched and struck his restless tent  
As errant gipsy butterflies  
In the gold air of summer skies  
Open and shut their silent wings,  
Those emblems of immortal things.  
Like nests of bees he routed out  
The toothed redan, the strong redoubt,  
He brushed gray troopers from his path  
As mowers sweep the meadow path,

He flanked brigades of butternut men  
And moved right on and flanked again.  
Spread like the branches of a larch  
His stately broad-tread legions march,  
One-hearted hosts and three-strand strong  
Down one great road, and in the throng  
The grand old Cumberland swings along,  
Full forty miles from wing to wing,  
Of all imperial highways, king.  
And girdling Dixie like a Zone  
They made a toll-road of their own.  
The North, her hand upon her lips,  
In silence watched this strange eclipse—  
A valiant army blotted out,  
Its doom and destiny a doubt—  
Beyond "the dead-line" and the reach  
Of lightning trains and lightning speech—  
All silent as the moon, until  
The coastwise way there came a thrill  
Electric,— told of transit done,  
The line of Federal light begun  
To shine "way down in Dixie"— the head  
Of Sherman's columns risen from the dead —  
Of fleets, that showing all their teeth  
Roared "Welcome" with their storms of breath,  
The laughter of the Grecian god ;  
Of flag-staffs like old Aaron's rod  
All blossoming with immortelles ;  
Of fair Savannah's wedding bells  
That rung at last the Union chime  
And wrought "hosanna" in the rhyme—  
Atlanta to Atlantic comes !  
Cheer, all ye bugles ! Roll salute, ye drums !

## LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN.

A ROUND the Chattanooga gate  
The billowy sky lines ebb and flow,  
Where giants' summer fallows wait  
    The long slow centuries come and go.  
The Titan plows but never drags,  
Sows bowlders for a crop of crags  
And never harvesting a stone  
Leaves all the furrows granite-grown.  
Three miles out when the war-dogs sleep  
But Jordan when the greyhounds sweep,  
The vast abutment of a bridge,  
The quadrant curve of Mission Ridge  
Confronts, and binds with welding fire  
The strong horizon with a five-mile tire.

## LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN.

Think of a great embodied frown,  
    Majestic cloud of rock outlawed  
From Heaven, with cragged and crested crown  
    Halted half way 'twixt sky and sod —  
Two thousand feet of frown, and plumed  
With smokes of batteries that boomed  
Like Baltic seas — boomed like the bells  
That toll when earthquakes ring the knells.  
Grand with millenniums of age  
There Lookout stands and fronts a page  
Of empires, five great States in sight,  
Cinqueports of peace; broad harvests white  
As flags of truce array the plain,  
Fleecy with cotton, gold with grain,

Where live-oak turns to war-ship's bone,  
Starred with palmetto and magnolia-strown.

Vespasian's royal edifice  
Whose world of ruin nursed his name,  
Would be a vestibule to this  
Great amphitheatre of fame.

Upon its parquet's rugged floors  
Lie cities of the noiseless doors,  
White drifts of camps like flocks of sheep ;  
I see artillery asleep ;  
The six-in-hands of muleteers  
Behind a picket-fence of ears ;  
I see gray swarms along the hills ;  
I hear the bayonet coffee-mills,  
A snare drum snarling to itself,  
A catch of song, a blue-coat joke ;  
I smell the sweet red-cedar smoke.  
No sign of storm or anything,  
The very standards droop and cling.

Sometimes Minerva would unfold her  
Hands on Lookout's lofty shoulder,  
Shake from a cloudy handkerchief  
An iron bangle down the cliff ;  
A gun just growled and drowsed again —  
A bolt of thunder and a drop of rain.

The tiles of hard-tack ran so low  
They would not roof a poor man's shed,  
The slabs of bacon came down slow,  
The boys drew up their belts and said,  
“ There's three holes left ! and while they last  
We'll fit the — stomach to the fast ! ”

Two picket lines, the blue, the gray,  
One done in pencil, one in ink,  
Across the valley silent lay,  
So near, no man would ever think  
They could be enemies abreast,  
Those lounging lines with guns at rest.

A battery tolls. You should have seen  
That skirmish line sweep coolly out,  
The stately tread, the bayonets' sheen,  
And not a breath and not a shout,  
As decorous as a dress-parade,  
Rejoicing heralds each brigade.  
Dead earnest now the kindling line,  
Dead earnest makes the action fine,  
'Tis "*striking*" time by battle clock,  
And Sherman's iron knuckles knock  
A double thunder at the mouth,  
Black with powder, parched with drouth,  
Of burrowed Tunnel Hill, where flags  
Burn blue defiance from the crags.  
Now Sherman, gauntlet at his feet,  
Hurls columns dense as winter wheat,  
As if he whirled a sabre-blade,  
Straight up the steeps, while down the grade  
The bellowing batteries played.  
He rules that field with red and blue  
Where long-flanked legions upward flew,  
In lines of fire he writes a page  
Of honor for a later age  
And holds the gray bird by the wing,  
A fluttering, half-disabled thing.

## THE BATTLE IN THE CLOUDS.

Hark, Lookout Valley on the boil,  
The caldron range of hell's caboose !  
A roused volcano's mad turmoil,  
'Tis Hooker's kennels broken loose ;  
They hound the flying echoes down  
The graybeard cliffs and mountains brown.  
Then round old Lookout's rugged shoulder,  
Above his epaulet of boulder.  
Led by the colors' holy light  
A blue-blouse column heaves in sight,  
And swings around the mountain's breast,  
All scarred across its rocky vest  
With rifle-pits. Down from the crest  
The shot is plunging overhead,  
The gash of trenches growing red  
With angry fire. Resplendent morn !  
Thanks unto God that I was born  
To see that line of Federal sky,  
Our Morning Stars so very nigh  
I dream I might have heard them sing  
But for the clash of battle's heavy wing.  
Then Lookout vanishes. Instead  
A tall and ghostly Carmelite,  
A cowl upon his muffled head,  
Stands in his grave-clothes ashen white,  
While hearts of fire are throbbing loud  
Through that ten thousand yards of shroud !  
They burn it as with spots of dawn,  
The battle in the air rolls on —  
Alive, I hear, bewildered, whirled,  
The tumult of another world !

Lookout, good night ! Thy name shall be  
The Sinai of the Tennessee !

## THE STORMING OF MISSION RIDGE.

Down in the valley thousands lay  
And waited for the halting day—  
Lay like a vast and curving shield  
Embossed with hearts, inspired, annealed—  
Those crescent trenches with a three-mile sweep,  
Whence true-blue, living steel should leap  
And cut its way like one broad blade  
With cannonade and fusilade  
Out to the Ridge with one broad swing  
And up as if they all took wing.  
When those men saw from Lookout's crown  
Limp "bonny blue" come fluttering down,  
Saw Federal flag and rising sun  
Together climbing to high noon,  
They roared as with one mighty mouth  
Around the curve from North to South,  
No burst of song, no hymn divine,  
But "Hooker's opened the cracker-line!"  
Begone all thought of care or sorrow,  
We'll dine to-day if we die to-morrow !  
See stout Fort Wood in Indian red,  
A black smoke blanketing his head,  
Pitch quoits with thunder, clean across  
The valley, and with two-mile toss,  
As charms swing light from woman's wrists,  
Hurl death by handfuls from his iron fists.  
They turn their bayonets into brooms,  
The besoms of the battle's wrath,

And sweep as empty as old tombs,  
The fiery trenches in their path.  
They halt for breath — they climb amain,  
They struggle up against the rain  
Of musketry and canister.  
Death's stairs without a bannister.  
'Mid tumbled rocks and wrecks of trees,  
The bullets whistling in the breeze,  
Ah, grape-shot pave a slippery street !  
The shrapnel shelling at their feet —  
They wipe the bloody sweat and leave  
A crimson chevron on each azure sleeve.  
Slow up the devil's torrid zone,  
Careened upon its rugged side  
With shattered shapes of ruin strown,  
The blue surge rises like the tide  
In Fundy's Bay, as if to charge  
Up the horizon's mountain marge  
Where loving earth with Heaven weds,  
Where lie the sullen thunder-heads —  
And on that tide and on that drift  
The Federal Colors float and lift  
As if some angel reaching down  
Had claimed and grasped them for his own.  
The flags from Shiloh and Stone River,  
The flags from Chickamauga shiver,  
As up the ridge the battle rolls,  
As up the bridge for passing souls  
That fill invisible as song  
The air alive, and thrill along  
By speechless throngs, and one by one  
The beams and timbers of the halting sun.

Three flags go down in a single place,  
Drop stained and tattered to their doom,  
God gave them grit! God give them grace!  
Ah, no, not dead, see where they loom  
Amid the crashes and the cheers  
Of Cumberlander mountaineers.  
They think they hear the raven call  
High perched above death's chamber-door,  
Shoulder to shoulder "nevermore,"  
Each for himself and God for all.

Then Sheridan, Fame's "little Phil,"  
Charged like a hunter at the hill,  
The bees of death around his head,  
Where valor went his valor led,—  
Now golden spurs to Sheridan!  
Who rode ahead in danger's van  
Cross-cut to glory in a day  
And never changed his horses!  
Who met disaster on the way,  
And rallied back the broken forces,  
Gave panic pulse heroic stir  
And rode right on to Winchester;—  
Now Wood beside him rides waist-deep  
Where e'en the dead can hardly sleep—  
They meet the avalanche coming down,  
They hurl it back to the Ridge's crown—  
The columns turn to blue steel wedges,  
The colors flutter at the edges,  
They rive in twain the lichenledges,  
As if our battery beetles' boom  
Drove all those living wedges home  
Against the wild gray swarming steep

Where thunder keeps his smoky sheep  
And dots the ridge as if he meant  
To graze across the continent !  
Burned, reddened, rent, and sore beset,  
God's eagles all, they'll reach the eyrie yet !  
They droop, they fly, five flags abreast !  
Through rifted cloud to crown the crest !  
'Mid cheers and shouts and tears and laughter  
They clear the garret to the rafter !  
The red sun turns a mighty Mars  
And sets on fire the stripes and stars.

Beyond the Ridge, that night, the moon  
Rose full and round as a prairie noon,  
And hung an instant like a shield  
Upon the wall beyond the field.  
And there, across that silver face,  
Coin of the realm by God's dear grace,  
That world we think without a grave,  
That world without a troubled wave,  
Bearing a banner, slowly drew  
A company of Boys in Blue,  
And every filmy star shone through !  
And there embossed in high relief,  
And ah, how beautiful and brief !  
Struck in the twinkling of an eye,  
And poised upon the edge of sky,  
In honor of the battle given,  
A grand medallion from the mint of Heaven !

## ARLINGTON HEIGHTS.

WASHINGTON, MAY 30TH, 1886.

HERE falls to-day Love's equinoctial rain  
Of buds and blossoms that will fade away  
To-morrow, and we seek them here in vain.

Will nothing last forever and a day  
That we can bring for tribute? Have you thought  
How near immortal a Forget-me-not?  
That Violet's eye is only closed awhile  
For fresher fragrance and a brighter smile?  
Then let the pansies rain and lilies snow  
Till earth's last flower of May forgets to blow.  
So shall the story of these Dead of ours  
Spring to new life as deathless as the flowers.

The angel guard upon their radiant rounds  
Midway between the green world and the blue,  
Look down in wonder on these sacred grounds,  
As if the Spring rehearsing Summer through  
Had *camped* her flowers and waited for the word  
To lead them forth and stand before the Lord.  
They see a mighty continent to-day  
Strangely bereft of half a million graves,  
As if the surging of the floral waves  
In fragrant silence washed them all away.  
They see a thousand congregations strong,  
From far Atlantic to the Golden Gate,  
In sun and rain, with reverent heart and feet,  
Come out with emblem, flag and flower to throng  
The resurrection gardens where they wait  
Who never more shall march the ringing street—  
They see the mart throb out the multitude—

They see a widow in a faded hood,  
Who nursed some violets by her cottage door,  
Now lay the blue-eyed children of the wood  
Upon a grave whose grassy roof grows lower.  
As troubled waves subside when storm is o'er—  
A dimple in the sod, as if Earth smiled  
To think she holds her weary soldier child !

That angel guard beholds this blossomed land  
Afire with flags, as if old Aaron's rod  
Had flowered to-day in loveliness, for sod  
As human as a brother, more of man than clod,  
And leavened by its graves to something grand,  
As if a million tatters of the night,  
All striped with triune tints of daybreak light,  
No pleiad lost, ablaze with all their stars,  
Were flung this morning from a million spars !  
Though struck by lightnings, clouded up with wrath  
As black as night, as red as golden blood,  
Tossed by the tempest, trailed in battle's path  
In mountain gorges and by field and flood,  
As eloquent to-day, these Freedom flowers,  
As in that Continental hour of hours,  
'Mid musketry, and prayers, and tears, and cheers,  
It first began to flutter out its hundred years !  
When Mercy went away to Arctic seas  
She took no cargo but the blessed flag;  
When panting Science climbs the mountain crag  
She sets that banner drifting in the breeze.  
"Give us a bugle-call ! " the trooper said,  
"Or else unfurl Old Glory in my sight ! "  
They laid the flag upon his dying-bed,  
And then he smiled and bade them long good-night.

I saw it flutter up the rugged steep,  
When Sinai came again on Lookout's crest;  
I saw the clouds of Blue right upward sweep,  
As if the sea would seek the eagle's nest !  
It was not life, or death, or wrath, or scorn,  
Or thirst for blood that took those men abroad  
To brave the tempest and to spurn the sod,  
Shake off the heavy earth that clogs and clings,  
And take to air like beings born with wings.  
Ah, brightly shine, thou far November morn !  
The flag inspired them like a trumpet's blast —  
It made them heroes first, and shrouded them at last !

If men shall keep the faith and God shall will,  
Baptized in blood and Declaration-born,  
This flag shall fly till resurrection morn,  
An inspiration and a glory still,  
The wedding record of a married world —  
Unroll as now, its grand commission then,  
And Ages read in every fold unfurled,  
Wrote out in lightnings, uttered in the thunder:  
“Behold this new commandment unto men:  
What God has joined let no man put asunder !”

## THE HEROES AND THE FLOWERS.

**I**N Rose Hill, Chicago, stands a monument to the Boys in Blue. It is the Angel Hope, waked by a master from her sleep in the pale tombs of Carrara. A star is over her head, and one hand is lifted toward it as if she had just plucked it fresh from Heaven, or as if she had halted it that it might shine there forever. She keeps watch and ward over the dead soldiers of Bridges' Battery lying at her feet. Their graves radiate from the base of the monument like the rays that encircle the head of the Madonna.

Standing by the Angel one day in May, and looking down upon those beds of peace, whose occupants I had known, and some of whom I had seen in the grand anger of battle, this was the thought: Will nothing wake these cannoneers?

Let us try bugles, and they shall not wake them.

Let the drums beat to arms, but they shall not heed them.

We will wheel out the battery and give the thunder-gusts of battle, and they shall slumber right on.

They are hopelessly dead. They are utterly dumb. We must summon witnesses to testify for them who cannot speak, and among them this marble Angel that came all the way across the sea for their sake. That star above her brow is a star fallen out of the flag. The flag? And we never thought of it when we would wake the sleepers! Ah, that is the thing! Over all "the pomp and circumstance" of war, over all constitutions and laws, they will surely heed the Flag, and they do, and the dead soldiers answer the roll-call. So, the poem did not blossom like a flower in a week, but opened like a fan in an instant, and who wonders?

That golden day in May, on the threshold of June, the murmur of the distant city, the hush of the multitude, the air sweet with ten thousand flowers, the marble doors of the enduring houses the grave-digger builds, standing far and near, white and still in the sunshine — doors that shall open to mortal love and longing never more — I can never forget it, for I shall never look upon its like again.

## THE HEROES AND THE FLOWERS.

A GREAT mart's majestic arterial beat  
Throbbed this multitude out, where the graves at our  
feet  
Have so roughened the earth with their motionless surge  
That we know we are treading its uttermost verge,  
That another step more and life's flag would be furled,  
Another step more, we are out of the world !

Did ye think ye had come to give greeting to June,  
Who had opened her gates by a May-day too soon,  
Breathed her buds into blossom, her birds into song,  
And reached here before us by ever so long ?  
Stay, reverent feet ! Bid the bosom be still !  
The campaigning is ended—we halt at Rose Hill.  
We are looking for comrades off duty forever !  
Do you dream that a handful of ashes can sever  
The stout sterling hearts that were beating as one,  
And kept time as they beat, to the throb of a gun ?

Now summon the sexton, master-builder for man,  
Who has worked for the world since its dying began—  
Bid him tell if he thinks he ever has crushed  
Out the love of a heart that was worth the poor dust  
That would hide it. I solemnly tell you, no clod  
Tolls the knell of the love as immortal as God,  
That is born out of danger and christened with blood;  
That can look in the graves of dead valor and say  
It was grander than living, that passing away,  
For they halted the world for the truth and the right,  
Said "Begone, mighty Death, and forever good-night!"

Ah, the brave cannoneers overtaken at last !  
Here they went into camp when the "dead line" was  
passed,  
Left the turbulent world with a cadence sublime,  
And these born sons of thunder had marched out of  
time,  
Worn away for grand orders their glorious scars,  
Here they lie, side by side, front face to the stars !

And I knew we should find them ! As ever their wont,  
Bridges' Battery Boys always breasted the brunt,  
As in life, so in death, they had gone to the "front !" "  
Will they sleep out their furlough ? Blow bugles amain !  
Give the old warble breath ! Let them hear it again.  
Oh, ye trumpets give o'er ! If the sleepers can hear  
They will answer you back with an old-fashioned cheer.

There's a goldfinch aloft on a billow of song,  
There's the drift of a leaf as it rustles along —  
Can nothing bring utterance out of the sod  
But the blast of that angel, the Bugler of God ?

Bring out the drum-majors ! Strike with ague the air,  
Bid them sling up the parchment, and tighten the snare,  
Bid the drums of the drummer-boys beat "the long  
roll,"

And the surges of thunder rumble up to the pole,  
Till they jar the dead clod, till they thrill the live soul.  
Stormy pulses be dumb ! All unheeded, unheard,  
As the heart-beat that troubles the breast of a bird.

Wheel the Battery out ! Unlimber the guns !  
All flashing electric the eyes of its sons,

All glowing the forges, all ready to fire,  
The cannon all panting with keenest desire,  
The columns all grander and broader and higher,  
For the souls within range, God pardon their sins !  
Let all go, Mighty Heart ! and the battle begins.  
Each throb is the thunder—a bolt for each flash  
Rends the air with a howl, smites the earth with a  
crash,  
And the shriek of the shell with the quivering cry  
That a demon might utter if demons could die,  
Cuts keen through the din like a wing through the sky;  
Till old Kennesaw roars from its mantle of cloud,  
And Lookout stands white before God in its shroud,  
As if Gabriel's trumpet had sounded that day,  
And the mountain had heard and was first to obey !  
And the breath of the battery dims the broad noon,  
And the heart of the battery quickens its tune,  
It is "Stand by the guns !" It is "Right about wheel !"  
It is "In with the iron !" It is "Out with the Steel !"

Spike the guns ! When their tongues of eloquent fire  
Sent the crashing old anthem, that ought to inspire  
The pale dead in their graves, around the green world,  
Not a cheer fluttered up, not a shroud was unfurled.  
Did the men of Chaldea, lone watching afar,  
Ever hear, in their dreaming, the throb of a star ?  
Inarticulate earth ! Is there nothing can reach  
To thy chambers serene ? Can unlock the dead speech ?

We have come into court, this court of the Lord,  
To bear witness for them who can utter no word.  
Bare-hearted, bare-browed, in this presence we stand,  
For the gift Pentecostal comes down on the land ;

To speak for the speechless how witnesses throng,  
And the earth is all voice, and the air is all song !  
There's a fleet of white ships blown abroad on the deep,  
And their courses forever they peacefully keep,  
And they toss us a roar and it melts into words,  
And they strike to the heart like the sweeping of swords :  
"Would ye honor the men you must look in their graves,  
Who did score danger out with their wakes from the  
waves."

There are soft, fleecy clouds fast asleep in the sun,  
Like a flock of white sheep when the washing is done,  
Not a breath of a battle is staining the blue,  
It is nothing but Paradise all the way through !  
There are domes of white blossoms where swelled the  
white tent,  
There are plows in the field where the war-wagons went,  
There are songs where they lifted up Rachel's lament.  
Would you know what this mighty beatitude cost,  
You must search in the graves for what Liberty lost !  
Has man waited too long that the silence is broken  
By beings that God never meant should have spoken  
And that never were born — poor inanimate things  
All endowed with the accents of creatures and kings ?  
Oh, ye living, make way ! For direct from the tomb  
Of Carrara a wonderful witness has come—  
As fair as an angel, as free from all sin,  
With one whisper from God would her pulses begin !  
She had lain there forever in marble repose,  
But Love spoke the word, she grew human, and rose,  
At the touch of the sculptor, awoke from the swoon,  
Cast off the cold shroud and stood up in the noon !  
Will you see where that hand, pure and pale as a drift,

Has just halted a star with its eloquent lift,  
That the heroes who lie in their slumber together  
May have it for emblem, whatever the weather?  
'Tis a spark from the Flag ! Dare ye think they are  
dead

Without whom the brave star had forever been shed,  
And the autumn come down like the night on the world  
And our fragment of Heaven disaster'd and furled !  
Aye ! up with the banner and down with the thought !  
Fling the "old glory" out till the breezes have wrought  
Into billows of beauty its marvellous flame  
That can kindle a soul to the color of fame !

Now, Sergeant, the roll ! Soft and low, sweet and clear,  
The dread silence is cleft, and the answer is "here!"  
Ye that trod the acanthus and trampled it down,  
And it turned at the touch a Corinthian crown.  
Here ! glorious Score ! On our hearts and our lips,  
Not a name of you all can be quenched in eclipse !  
Disenthralled from your graves, you have left them  
alone,  
We will borrow them now for these dead of our own !  
Let us bury all bitterness, passion, and pride,  
Lay the rankling old wrong to its rest by their side,  
Keeping step to the manhood that marches the zone,  
And believe the good God will take care of His own !

## LINCOLN AND HIS PSALM.

TO lay hands upon Lincoln's classic text for any sake may be presumption, but, in my desire to show how near akin are the Maker, who is the poet, and the Doer, I have been guilty of this thing. Whoever rises to the dignity of great truth or grand achievement, a solemn earnestness shed upon him like a glory out of Heaven, is so much a poet that, without his knowledge, his words strike into the stately Epic march or spring away in Lyric flight.

And so, by jostling a word here and there out of its rightful place in the compact line, the utterances of the poetic soul are easily adjusted to poetic semblance. The grandest moods in men, like the royal scenes in nature, where each grows salient as if it would touch the heavens, are never merry. There is no laughter in the Mountain that, robed in the ermine of immortal winters, stands up to judge the World. But the brook at its foot idles on with a childish laugh and is forgotten.

To me, Lincoln's strong and rugged face was always a poem in itself. There were flashes of wit and flickers of humor like glimpses of sunshine in a shady place, but ever in those kind and gentle eyes an unspeakable sadness, as if, no matter what the lips were saying, they were always seeing the mission of their master's life, at once an anthem and a dirge, that should touch unreckoned ages, and make his words imperishable as our English speech.

Ah, "it is as dread and awful a thing to" *live* so grand a life as it is to die a tragic death.

## LINCOLN AND HIS PSALM.

MOVE on, ye pilgrims to the Springfield tomb—  
Be proud to-day, O portico of gloom,

Where lies the man in solitary state

Who never caused a tear but when he died

And set the flags around the world half-mast.

The gentle Tribune and so grandly great

That e'en the utter avarice of Death  
    That claims the world, and will not be denied,  
Could only rob him of his mortal breath.  
    How strange the splendor though the man be  
        past !  
    His noblest inspiration was his last.  
The statues of the Capitol are there  
As when he stood upon the marble stair  
And said those words so tender, true, and just,  
A royal psalm that took mankind on trust —  
    Those words that will endure, and he in them  
    While May wears flowers upon her broidered hem,  
And all the marble snows and drifts to dust:  
“ Fondly do we hope, fervently we pray  
That this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass  
        away;  
    With charity for all, with malice toward none,  
    With firmness in the right  
        As God shall give us light,  
    Let us finish the work already begun —  
Care for the battle sons, the Nation's wounds to bind,  
Care for the helpless ones that they will leave behind,  
Cherish it we will, achieve it if we can,  
A just and lasting peace forever unto Man !”

Amid old Europe's rude and thundering years  
    When people strove as battle-clouds are driven,  
One calm white angel of a day appears  
    In every year, a gift direct from Heaven,  
Wherein from setting sun to setting sun  
No thought or deed of bitterness was done.  
“ Day of the truce of God !” Be this day ours

Until perpetual peace flows like a river,  
And hopes as fragrant as the tribute flowers  
Fill all the land forever and forever.

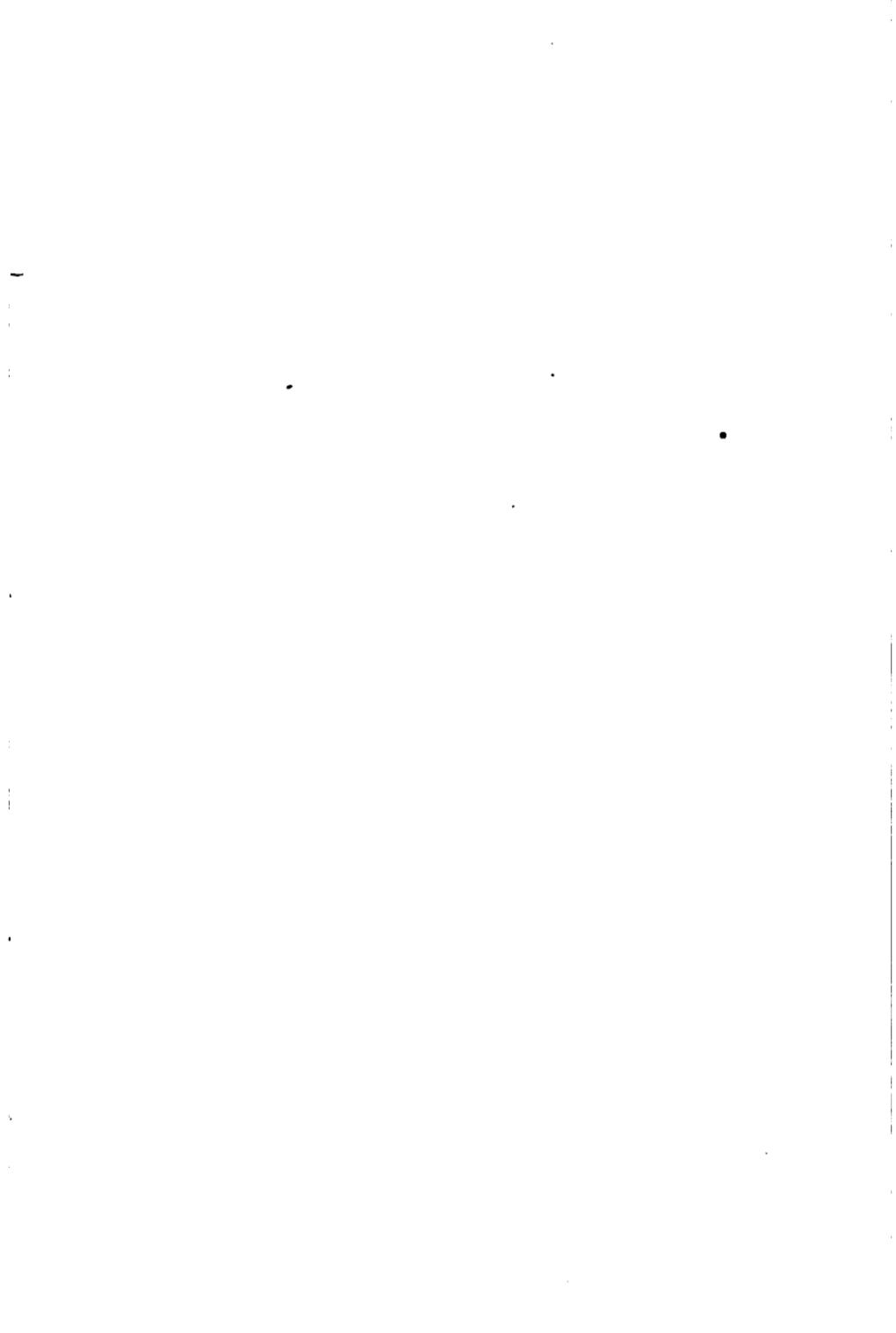
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**TWILIGHTS.**

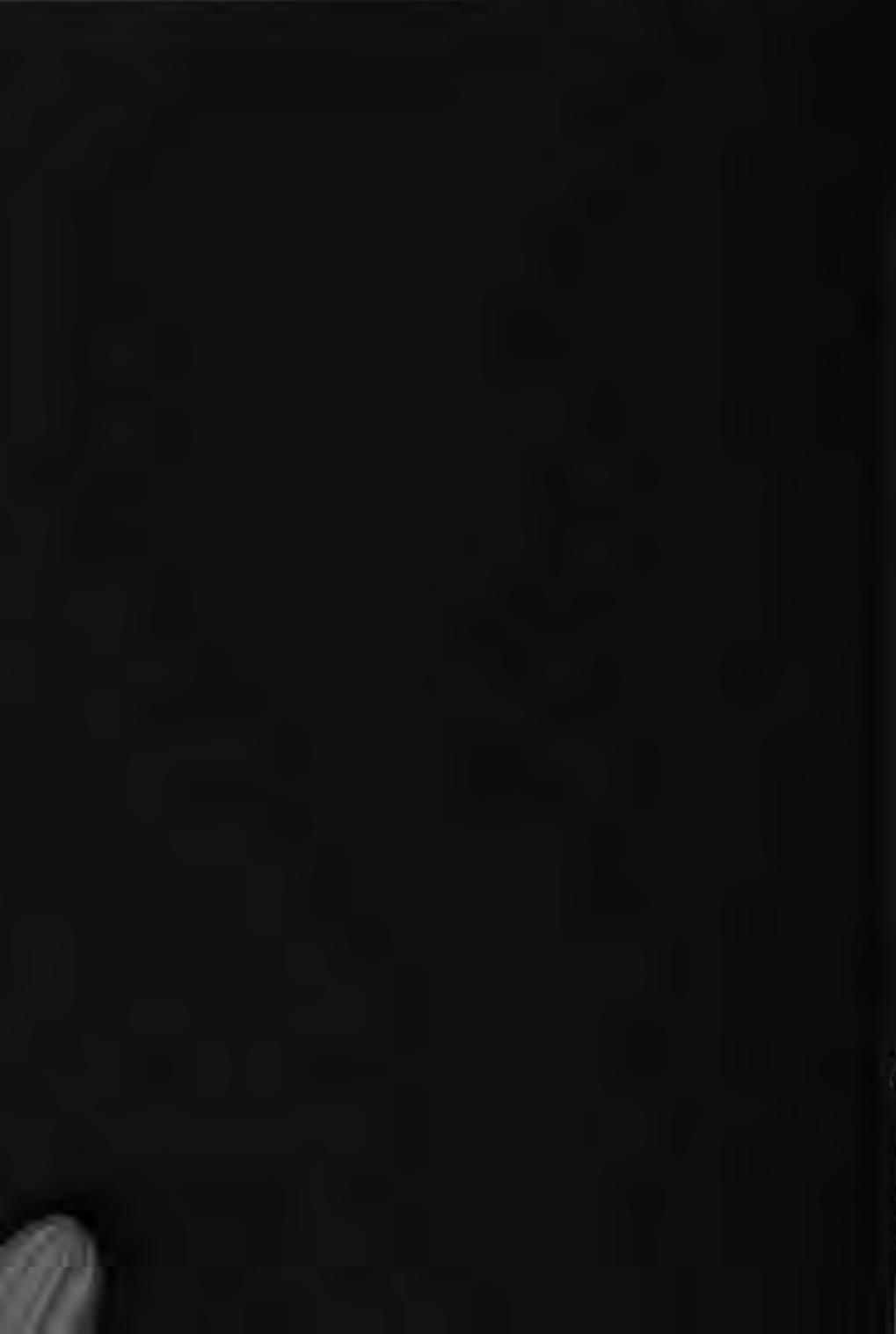
**L**IVES nobly ended make the twilights long,  
And keep in tune God's nightingales of song.











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